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# Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey



## THE CHOICES PROGRAM

*Explore the Past... Shape the Future*

*History and Current Issues for the Classroom*

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# The CHOICES Program

June 2014

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The Choices Program develops curricula on current and historical international issues and offers workshops, institutes, and in-service programs for high school teachers. Course materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens.

## Acknowledgments

*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* was developed by the Choices Program with the assistance of the research staff at the Watson Institute for International Studies, scholars at Brown University, and several other experts in the field. We wish to thank the following researchers for their invaluable input:

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*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* is part of a continuing series on international public policy issues. New units are published each academic year and all units are updated regularly.

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ISBN 1-60123-164-4 / 978-1-60123-164-2.

## Turkey and its Neighbors



## Introduction: Protests in Gezi Park

In late May 2013, a small group of protesters, mainly students and environmentalists, gathered in Gezi Park in Istanbul. They staged a peaceful demonstration against their government, which planned to demolish the public park and develop the land into a shopping center and luxury apartments. Police reacted quickly, ejecting protestors and burning their tents. The harsh response shocked much of the population, and what began as a small sit-in escalated into a massive wave of antigovernment protests.

Millions of Turkish citizens took to the streets, and were met with a violent crackdown by police and security forces. Thousands were arrested or injured, and several were killed. Yet in spite of the tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets, protesters voiced their frustrations and demands. Although the ruling party was democratically elected with broad public support, many protesters believed that it had adopted undemocratic policies, and had begun overstepping its bounds trying to regulate public life. For example, the government had monitored and censored the internet.

***“Prime Minister Erdoğan thinks that he is a sultan, he does not listen to anybody.... He thinks he can do whatever he wants.”***

—Yeşim Polat, a twenty-two-year-old student and protester

With their banners, chants, graffiti, and tweets, protesters addressed issues ranging from media freedom to widespread corruption to Turkey’s foreign policy. Participants represented a broad spectrum of the population—Turks and Kurds, students and adults, religious and nonreligious citizens. In response, supporters of the government also organized demonstrations. Though not unified in their demands, protesters sent a powerful message to their government and the world: the people have opinions about the future of Turkey, and they want to be heard.

Over the past century, Turkey has undergone important transformations. Understanding Turkey’s history contributes to our understanding of what is taking place today.



Eser Karadag (CC BY-ND 2.0).

Photojournalists document the clashes between protesters and the police in Taksim Square on June 22, 2013.



Photograph by Bex Walton (CC BY 2.0).

Istanbul is Turkey's largest city with a population of fourteen million. Previously known as Constantinople and Byzantium, Istanbul was once the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, Latin, and Ottoman Empires. One of the largest cities in the world, it straddles both continents of Europe and Asia and is divided by the Bosphorus Strait.

In the following pages, you will have the opportunity to explore the evolution of Turkey. In Part I of the reading, you will trace the final years of the Ottoman Empire, the struggle for independence, and the birth of the Turkish Republic. In Part II, you will explore Atatürk's sweeping reforms, the emergence of a multi-party democracy, a series of military coups, and the Kurdish conflict. Part III examines current issues in Turkey, from recent political changes within the country to Turkey's foreign affairs. Ultimately, you will grapple with the same questions and challenges facing people in Turkey today.

- What should Turkey's democracy look like?
- What role should religion play in government and society?
- Should Turkey expand human rights and freedoms?
- What role should Turkey play in the region and the world?

These questions are at the center of a vigorous debate in Turkey about the future. When you finish the reading, you will recreate the discussion in Turkey with your classmates.

## Part I: The End of an Empire

### Turkey's People and Geography

Turkey today is a country of 81.5 million people. It straddles the edges of two continents—Europe and Asia—and is considered part of both Europe and the Middle East. Turkey's geography has shaped its history, contributed to its vast cultural diversity, and continues to affect its role in the world today.

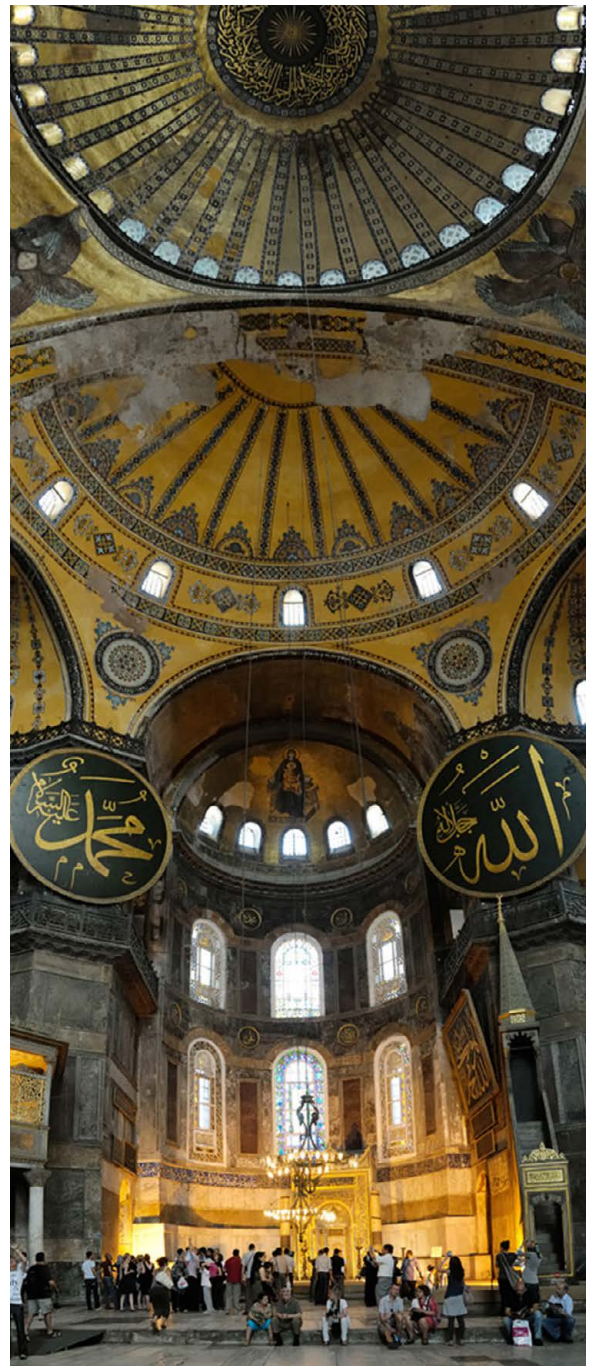
#### *Who lives in Turkey?*

Turkey is home to a range of ethnic and religious groups. The term “Turk” can be confusing—it is used to describe people that are ethnically Turkish and people who speak Turkish as their first language. It is also used more broadly to describe all citizens of Turkey. Roughly 20 percent of the population is ethnically Kurdish. (Kurds are an ethnic group that lives primarily in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Armenia, and Syria.) Kurds are concentrated in the southeastern region of Turkey. Other ethnic minorities include Arabs, Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks.

Over 99 percent of people living in Turkey are Muslim. Most Turkish Muslims are Sunni, and there is also a significant Alevi minority. Religious minorities also include Christians and Jews. Turkish is the country's official language, and many students learn English in school. Kurdish, Arabic, and other languages are also spoken.

#### *What are some important features of Turkey's geography?*

Turkey is often described as the bridge between Europe and Asia. With an area slightly larger than Texas, Turkey's territory is divided between the two continents. The European territory in the northwest of the country is called Eastern Thrace, and the Asian territory is called Anatolia. Thrace is separated from Anatolia by the Turkish straits—the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles—busy commercial waterways linking the Black Sea to the Aegean Sea.



Christophe Meneboeuf (CC BY-SA 3.0).

The interior of Hagia Sophia, a landmark building in Istanbul. It was built during the sixth century CE as an Orthodox cathedral. Following the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul in 1453, the building was transformed into an Islamic mosque, with the addition of features such as minarets and Arabic calligraphy. In the 1930s, the government turned Hagia Sophia into a museum.

Much of central Anatolia is a rocky and rugged plateau. The eastern region of the country is very mountainous with an average elevation of nearly five thousand feet. About a quarter of Turkish workers have jobs in agriculture, growing crops such as cotton, beets, grains, hazelnuts, cherries, and apricots. Wheat is grown on the central plateau, while tobacco, olives and citrus fruits are grown along the coast.

The Tigris and Euphrates, major rivers flowing to the Persian Gulf, originate in Turkey. Turkey has built dams for irrigation and energy that cause tension with neighbors downstream, including Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Turkey's neighbors also include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, and Greece.

Of its population of over eighty-one million, close to three-quarters of people live in urban areas, and this percentage continues to grow. Istanbul, Turkey's booming metropolis, is home to fourteen million people. Previously known as Constantinople and Byzantium, Istanbul was once the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, Latin, and Ottoman Empires. One of the largest cities in the world, it straddles both continents of Europe and Asia, and is

divided by the Bosphorus Strait. The country's inland capital, Ankara, is home to about four million people.

## The Ottoman Empire

Turkey traces its roots to the Ottoman Empire, a vast empire that encompassed territories far beyond Anatolia and Thrace.

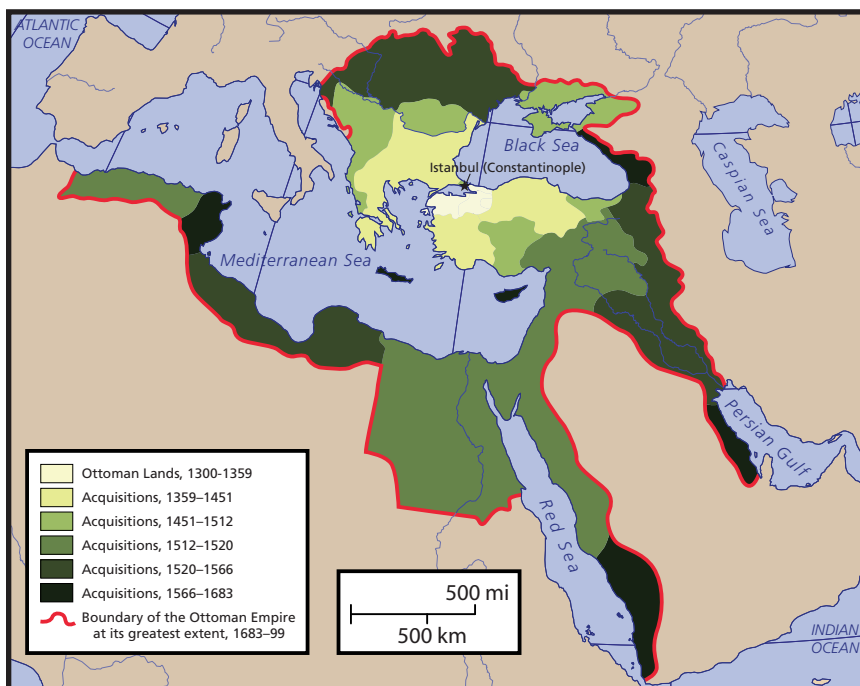
### *What was the Ottoman Empire?*

The Ottoman Empire was a multiethnic, multireligious empire ruled by sultans from a single family for over six centuries. At its peak, the Ottoman Empire was one of the most powerful empires in the world. Its territorial boundaries expanded and receded throughout its history from 1299 to 1923. Originally, most subjects were Christian, but as the Ottomans extended their power into Arab territories with large Muslim populations, the empire's population became more Muslim. Ottoman leaders were Sunni Muslims, and Ottoman law was based partly on Islamic law. Beginning in the sixteenth century, the Ottoman sultan took on the title of caliph, or the spiritual leader of the Islamic world.

The Ottoman Empire stretched into south-

eastern Europe, across North Africa, and throughout much of the Arabian Peninsula, including Mecca and Medina—two of the holy cities of Islam. The Ottoman navy dominated the waters of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and beyond. Although estimates of the Ottoman Empire's population vary, historians believe that by the mid-nineteenth century, the empire ruled over thirty-five million subjects.

Major international trade routes crisscrossed the empire, creating a bridge for commerce



The expansion of the Ottoman Empire.



Library of Congress. LC-DIG-ppmsc-06061.

A photograph of the Galata Bridge in Istanbul, ca. 1890-1900.

between Europe and Asia. Goods such as silk and spices from the East were transported across Ottoman territory and often shipped from Ottoman ports to Europe. Taxes on these goods provided cash for the empire.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, the Ottomans granted several European powers special rights in order to encourage trade, such as the right to trade without paying taxes. The Ottomans initially negotiated with Europe from a position of power, but with time European influence over the empire grew. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottomans came to depend on European powers, such as Britain and France, for diplomatic and military assistance. For example, the Ottomans relied on British and French support to challenge their Russian rivals during the Crimean War of 1854-1856.

### ***How did nationalist movements erode the Ottoman Empire?***

The Ottoman Empire achieved large territorial gains over the course of centuries, despite contests for territory with other em-

pires and foreign powers. It faced additional challenges from within its borders. In the wake of the French Revolution (1789-99), ideas about nationalism spread throughout Europe and among the Ottomans, taking root with many communities in the empire. In the nineteenth century, different groups resisted the authority of the Ottoman Empire and pressed for independence. Serbians led a series of revolts in the early nineteenth century, and eventually gained autonomy. Greeks rebelled and won independence in 1829. In 1839, Egyptians battled the Ottomans for control over territory. Nationalist movements would continue to challenge the Ottoman Empire throughout the 1800s and into the twentieth century.

### ***How did the Ottoman Empire change during the Tanzimat?***

The Tanzimat, which means “reorganization” in Turkish, was an era of government and legal reform from 1839-1876. During this time, the empire extended its telegraph network, constructed new roads and bridges, and

## Religious Minorities in the Ottoman Empire

To manage a vast and diverse empire that contained significant Christian and Jewish populations, Ottoman rulers gave religious minorities limited power over their own affairs. The Ottomans developed a system of millets, or religious communities. The empire granted millets the freedom to practice their religion, create their own laws, courts, and schools, and to collect taxes. For example, Armenian Christians, Jews, and Orthodox Christians within the empire had their own millets. Religious leaders from the millets reported to the Ottoman sultan, who held ultimate control over all subjects.

Although the Ottoman Empire discriminated against non-Muslims in some ways (for example, non-Muslims were forced to pay a special tax, called a *jizya*), historians point out that the empire was generally more tolerant of religious minorities than governments in Western Europe and elsewhere at the time. For example, when Spain expelled Jewish residents in 1492, many were welcomed in the Ottoman Empire.

expanded trade with Europe. Ottoman rulers standardized the tax system, modernized the military, and changed the system of military conscription.

The Ottomans also expanded educational services and developed a new system of government-run schools. This took control of education away from religious leaders and put it in the hands of the state. The empire built universities to train doctors, engineers, and accountants.

One of the main goals of the Tanzimat was to create unity and patriotism among subjects of the sprawling empire. Some Ottoman leaders believed that subjects would remain loyal if granted equality. The Tanzimat reforms granted greater rights for religious and ethnic minorities. This was partly in response to pressure from European powers, several of which were concerned about the unequal treatment of Ottoman Christians.

***“The Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of our lofty Sultanate shall, without exception, enjoy our imperial concessions. Therefore we grant perfect security to all the populations of our Empire in their lives, their honor, and their properties, according to the sacred law.”***

—Edict of Gülhane, 1839

Large-scale migration from rural to urban areas took place during the Tanzimat. Cities throughout the empire boomed in size. Istanbul’s population more than doubled between 1840 and 1890, approaching nearly one million residents. Many people migrated to escape illness and droughts in the countryside, or to avoid being drafted into the military. Immigrants migrated to the Ottoman Empire, including large numbers of Muslims that had been displaced by the expanding Russian Empire.

### ***Why did the Ottoman Empire adopt its first constitution?***

Over the course of the Tanzimat, power became more concentrated in the hands of the central government. During the final years of the Tanzimat, a secret society of young, middle-class intellectuals and bureaucrats emerged, known as the Young Ottomans. The Young Ottomans were determined to curb the sultan’s authority, and pressured him to adopt a constitution that would guarantee the rights of Ottoman subjects.

European powers, such as Britain and France, also pressured the empire to adopt a constitution. Europe had political influence over the empire because the Ottomans had taken out loans from European banks that they could not repay. In 1875, the empire declared



A postcard from 1908, featuring Ismail Enver, a military officer and leader of the Young Turk Revolution. ("Bey" identifies his rank in the Ottoman military.) "Long live the country, the nation, and freedom" is written in Ottoman Turkish and French.

bankruptcy, and European powers took greater control over parts of the Ottoman economy.

In 1876, the Ottoman Empire adopted its first constitution and created a parliament. But in 1878, less than two years later, the empire returned to being an absolute monarchy. The sultan suspended the constitution, shut down the parliament, and concentrated power in his own hands. Over the next three decades, the sultan took measures to control the press and limit political organizing.

### ***What was the Young Turk Revolution?***

After the turn of the century, opposition to the sultan grew among young military and law students in the Ottoman territory of Macedonia. In 1908, these students, later known as the Young Turks, organized under the name of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and led a local rebellion in July against the government. They demanded that the constitution be restored and that all citizens be granted the same rights, regardless of religion or ethnicity. The Young Turks believed these principles would modernize the empire, while protect-

ing it from internal separatist movements and foreign threats.

***“Hürriyet, müsavat, uhuvvet, adalet  
[liberty, equality, fraternity, justice].”***

—A motto of the Young Turk Revolution

Support for the CUP and its vision of a constitutional government grew in the Balkans. Fearing that the CUP would lead a revolt in the capital, and following the assassination of several government officials, the sultan agreed to reinstate the constitution on July 24, 1908.

In the year following the July revolution, parliamentary elections were held. At this time, the CUP did not want to officially enter politics, seeing itself as a military organization in charge of protecting the constitution. Instead, the CUP pressured the sultan and newly elected members of parliament to carry out its reforms. The government passed laws granting greater political freedoms and opened schools throughout the empire to make education more accessible.

***How did the Ottoman public respond to the Young Turk Revolution?***

In the wake of the revolution, the streets of Istanbul and other Ottoman cities filled with celebrations. Many Ottomans welcomed the new liberties and social changes: the creation of new political parties, newspapers, and magazines, and more freedom to organize and create associations. Women's organizations formed, and foreign sports, such as soccer, became popular. With the sultan's censorship lifted, the empire experienced a burst of public discussion and debate about its future.

Yet not all subjects welcomed the changes the CUP brought to the empire. For example, the CUP took away the jobs of tens of thousands of members of the "old regime," including the sultan's network of spies and many high-ranking military officers. The CUP also wanted to lessen the role of religion in government. Although the CUP did not completely abandon religious law, many of the laws adopted were secular, or nonreligious. This was met with resistance from some members of Ottoman society.

***Why did the CUP become increasingly authoritarian?***

In April 1909, a group of religious soldiers and students led a revolt in Istanbul. They disagreed with the secular laws enforced by the CUP and demanded strict adherence to Islamic law. CUP supporters in parliament fled the capital. The military intervened, allowing politicians to return to parliament and enact a series of laws to crush the opposition. The laws severely restricted freedoms of association and speech.



Ottoman troops in the Balkans, 1912.

Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Public Domain.

***Why did the CUP carry out a coup in 1913?***

In the years after the Young Turk Revolution, the empire suffered dramatic losses. Italy declared war in 1911 and captured Libya, a territory of the Ottoman Empire. During the First Balkan War of 1912, the Ottomans lost nearly all of their European lands as the Bulgarians, Serbians, Greeks, and Montenegrins took control of Albania and Macedonia. Between 1908 and 1913, the empire lost control over nearly half of its territories and the five million people who populated these regions. The total population of the empire decreased to nineteen million.

The CUP did not want to lose more territory. To rescue the situation, CUP leaders carried out a coup d'état in 1913. Three of the Young Turk leaders—Ismail Enver, Mehmet Talaat, and Ahmet Cemal—took control of the government and military. Under the leadership of the "Three Pashas," or the "Triumvirate," the CUP reformed the military with the help of Germany, and organized support among the population and government officials.

In the eastern part of Anatolia, the possibility of Russian expansion fueled the CUP's fears of rebellion by the Ottoman Armenian populations living there. These concerns would grow over the course of World War I.

## World War I and the Armenian Genocide

World War I (1914-1918) ultimately destroyed the Ottoman Empire. In the early months of the war, the empire allied itself with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These three powers became known as the Central Powers in World War I. They fought the Allied Powers—Russia, France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States.

### *How did World War I affect the empire?*

During the war, famine struck communities across the Ottoman Empire. Shortages in food supplies meant that many people could not afford to eat. Starvation and illness were also widespread in the military—typhus, cholera, scurvy, and malaria devastated troops. Four times as many soldiers serving in the Ottoman army died due to starvation and untreated wounds than from combat.

British forces, with the assistance of their Arab allies, drove Ottoman armies out of most of the empire's Arab provinces. In the East, Ottoman forces faced Russian troops that were vastly superior in numbers and equipment. Regions of Eastern Anatolia shifted between Russian and Ottoman control. As the border shifted, large populations of Armenian civilians and other minorities in the eastern provinces were caught in the fighting.

### *Why did the Turkish-Armenian conflict escalate in Eastern Anatolia?*

In 1915, Russia made substantial gains into Ottoman territory in Eastern Anatolia. The CUP government feared that minority groups in the region, especially the Armenians, planned to revolt against the empire with the help of Russian forces.

In April, at the same time that many Armenians were fighting on behalf of the Ottoman Empire, a group of Armenian separatists carried out a series of attacks against Ottoman military positions and communication lines in the East.

### *How was the Armenian Genocide committed?*

April 24, 1915 marked the start of the Armenian Genocide. The Ottoman government ordered the arrest and deportation or execution of over two hundred Armenian politicians, religious leaders, and businessmen in Istanbul. Ottoman officials who resisted the deportation process were replaced. CUP officials claimed that the Armenians planned to revolt and destroy the Ottoman Empire. This accusation produced widespread public support for the government's actions.

**“The great trouble with the Armenians is that they are separatists....**

**Because they have relied upon the friendship of the Russians, they have helped them in this war.... We have therefore deliberately adopted the plan of scattering them so that they can do us no harm.”**

—Ismail Enver Pasha, as recounted by Henry Morgenthau, U.S. ambassador to the Ottoman Empire

By 1923, 1.5 million Armenians—over two-thirds of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire—had been killed, deported, or forced into the desert where they starved to death. To this day, the Turkish government denies that these deaths were a genocide and claims that the Armenians were among the many people displaced and killed in the violent chaos of World War I.

**“They asked all the men and boys to separate from the women. There were some teen boys who were dressed like girls and disguised. They remained behind. But my father had to go.... They killed [the men] with bayonets at the end of their rifles.... Many of the women could not take it, and they threw themselves in the River Euphrates, and they, too, died. They did this killing right in front of us. I saw my father being killed.”**

—A survivor from Konya (a city in central Anatolia) recalling a 1915 massacre



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Armenian widows with their children, ca. 1915. At the start of the genocide, able-bodied Armenian men were shot. Ottoman officials forced women, children, and the few surviving men to march to the Syrian Desert. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians died during deportation.

During this time, the Ottoman Empire carried out massacres against other ethnic minorities as well, including Pontian Greeks and Assyrians.

### ***Why did the Ottomans admit defeat in World War I?***

By the end of 1918, the Ottoman army was battered and stretched thin across multiple fronts. The army's numbers had shrunk to one hundred thousand, only one-sixth of its size at its peak strength during the war. Over four hundred thousand soldiers had deserted. The population of Anatolia suffered a war-time death rate four times higher than that of France and Germany. The empire's borders had receded, and Allied forces were closing in on Istanbul.

In October 1918, the Ottomans signed the Armistice of Mudros to end the war. Allied ships anchored in the waters surrounding Istanbul and off the coast from the sultan's palace. The armistice specified areas of the Ottoman Empire that were to be occupied by the Allies. It also gave the Allies the right to intervene militarily in Armenian provinces "in the case of disorder."

The French occupied sections of southeastern Anatolia, Italians a region of southwestern Anatolia, and the Greeks Eastern Thrace and western Anatolia. The Allies took control of railways and the telegraph system, claimed access to Ottoman ports and waterways, and demanded the demobilization and disarmament of most Ottoman troops. The Ottoman government was left in place, but power over Anatolia rested with the Allies.

### **The War of Independence**

After World War I, many CUP leaders fled the country to avoid prosecution for the crimes they committed against Armenians. Other CUP leaders remained, vying for power with opposition parties and the sultan. Most Ottomans accepted the terms of the armistice, and were relieved that the war had ended. Yet in the years after the agreement was signed, public opinion turned against the Allies, largely because the Allies violated the terms of the armistice. For example, Greece pushed further into Ottoman territory in May 1919, invading İzmir, a city in western Anatolia. This sparked public outrage and mass demonstrations broke out in Istanbul.

## Allied Plans for the Ottoman Empire

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, President Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) announced a sweeping fourteen-point peace plan that he hoped to implement at the end of the war. Among the key principles of Wilson's proposal was national "self-determination," or the right of nations to govern themselves free from external interference.

***“The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development....”***

—Point XII of the Fourteen Points, Woodrow Wilson, 1918

While Wilson advocated for the independence of Ottoman territories, French, British, and Italian leaders refused to allow self-determination to undermine their plans to control new territory. Ultimately, Wilson backed away from his vision. The agreement reached at the Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920) allowed European states to not only keep their colonial possessions, but also expand their empires into new regions, including Ottoman territories.

The division of Ottoman territories involved a new international arrangement known as the mandate system. The Allies believed that the territories of the defeated Ottoman Empire were unqualified for independence and needed time, assistance, and advice from “advanced” powers before gaining independence. In truth, the mandate system allowed European empires to exert imperial control over former Ottoman territories for their own economic and political gain.

### ***Why did a national resistance movement emerge in Anatolia?***

Many Ottomans dreamed of ejecting the occupying forces and reclaiming control over the region. As early as 1918, local resistance groups, called Societies for the Defense of National Rights, sprung up in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace. Their mission was to keep the Muslim-majority, non-Arab portions of the empire intact. They objected to Allied plans to divide the empire and resisted Greek and Armenian advances into Ottoman territory. They also criticized the sultan for bowing to the demands of the Allies. A military officer named Mustafa Kemal would emerge as a leader of this growing national resistance movement.

### ***Who was Mustafa Kemal?***

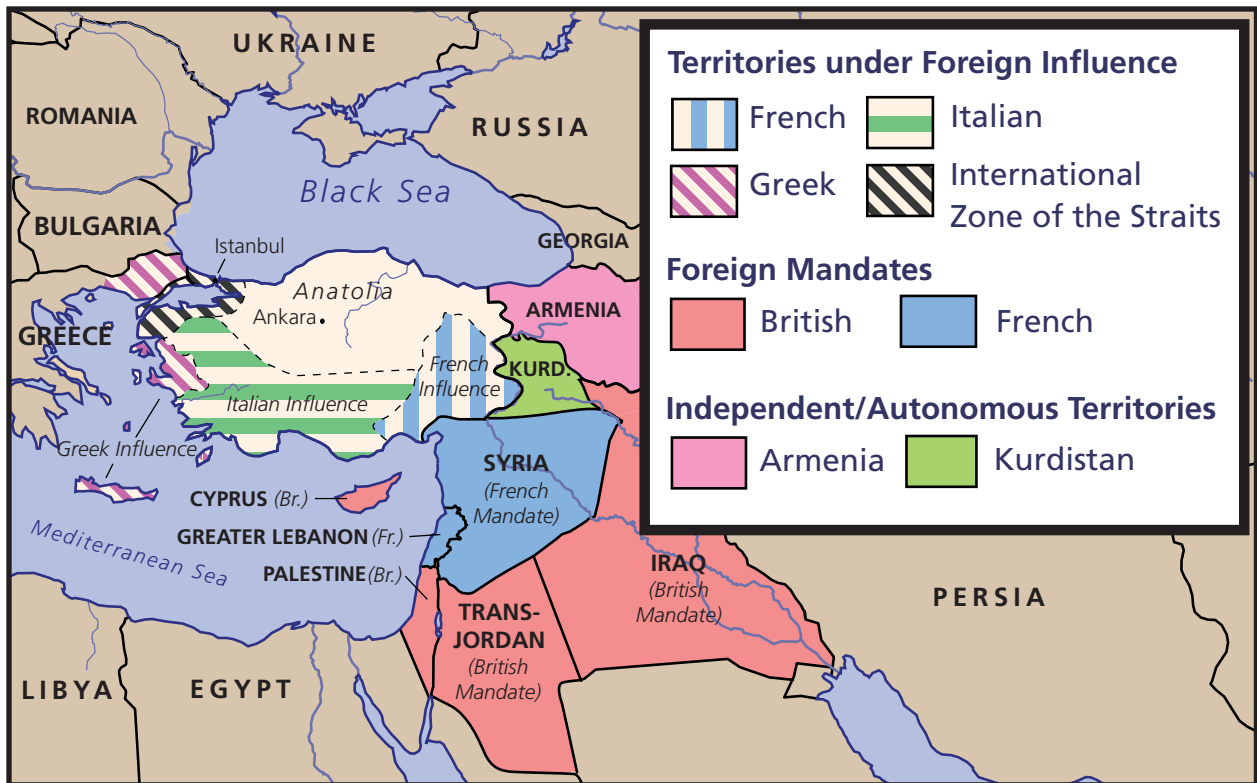
In May 1919, the sultan ordered Mustafa Kemal to oversee the disarmament of the Ottoman armies in Samsun, a city on the Black Sea. Kemal was a successful commander during World War I and a hero for his victory in

the Battle of Gallipoli. He was a member of the CUP, and had also participated in the Young Turk Revolution. He would later take the name Atatürk, which means “father of the Turks.”

Kemal disobeyed the sultan's orders and began to organize nationalist resistance groups to oppose the Allies. After Kemal refused to return to the capital, the government in Istanbul and the Allies fired him. But Kemal had gained the loyalty of the military. Many officers chose to support Kemal's resistance movement and ignored Allied orders to disarm and demobilize.

### ***How did Ankara become the capital of the national resistance movement?***

Mustafa Kemal brought together local and regional organizations into a more unified, national movement. In 1919, representatives of resistance groups from throughout Anatolia attended regional and national congresses. By January 1920, the nationalists controlled the Ottoman parliament in Istanbul, having



Division of the Ottoman Empire as outlined by the Treaty of Sèvres, 1920.

achieved broad public support and success during elections. This caused alarm among the Allies.

In March 1920, the British occupied Istanbul and began arresting and exiling prominent nationalists. Kemal invited members of parliament to Ankara, the hub of the nationalist movement, and called for the creation of a new government. Elections were held, and the new parliament, called the Grand National Assembly, convened in Ankara in April 1920.

The rift between Istanbul and Ankara widened rapidly. Resistance leaders pledged that they did not intend to take power away from the sultan, and that they only wished to liberate him from the grasp of the Allies. But the wary sultan, under pressure from the Allies occupying Istanbul, sent military forces to suppress the resistance movement. Smaller rebellions from within the population also challenged the nationalists. Nationalist leaders created special courts, called Independence Tribunals, to silence their opponents.

### *How did the Treaty of Sèvres carve up the Ottoman Empire?*

While the nationalist movement gained momentum, the victors of World War I negotiated the fate of the defeated Ottoman Empire. Nearly two years after achieving victory, the Allies finalized a peace treaty in August 1920. The peace treaty, known as the Treaty of Sèvres, dealt harsh terms to the Ottomans and transformed much of the empire's territory into mandates controlled by the Allies.

**France** gained control over Syria and Lebanon, and a zone of influence in south-eastern Anatolia. **Britain** received mandates in Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Trans-Jordan. **Italy** obtained control over territory in southern Anatolia along the Mediterranean coast and inland. The Treaty of Sèvres gave Ottoman territory in Europe and much of western Anatolia along the Aegean coast to **Greece**. It also called for the creation of an independent **Armenia** and an autonomous **Kurdistan**.

Istanbul and the surrounding straits and waterways were designated as international

zones. The Ottomans kept direct control of only central and northern Anatolia, much of it rugged and mountainous terrain.

***How did an independence war establish the new country of Turkey?***

Although the sultan's delegates signed the Treaty of Sèvres, resistance forces rejected the treaty and refused to accept the partition of Anatolia. When Greece sent more troops to Anatolia to enforce its terms, a full-scale war erupted, lasting from 1920 to 1922. The other Allied powers had little interest in or public support for waging another war in the region. Italy and France reached agreements with the nationalists, but Great Britain armed and supported Greek forces.

***“The Greeks are the people of the future in the Eastern Mediterranean.... They represent Christian civilization against Turkish barbarism.”***

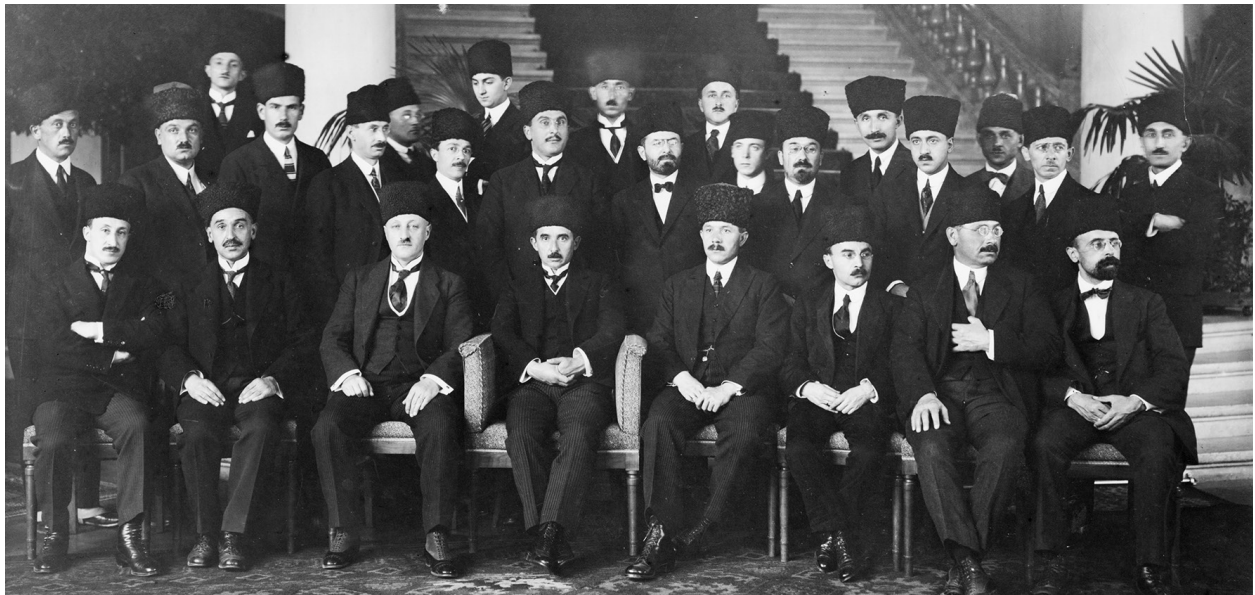
—British Prime Minister Lloyd George

Nationalist forces battled the Greeks on the western front and Armenians in the East. The War of Independence was also a civil war between loyalists of the Istanbul government and nationalists supporting the government in Ankara.

Ultimately, the war resulted in a crushing defeat for Greece and a triumph for those who would establish the new country of Turkey. The Allies invited delegates from both Istanbul and Ankara to negotiate a new peace treaty that would replace the Treaty of Sèvres. Leaders in Ankara responded by abolishing the sultanate (position of sultan) in November 1922 and proclaiming the government of Ankara to be the official government. The last Ottoman sultan, Mehmed VI, left Istanbul on a British warship, and a delegation from Ankara traveled to negotiations in Switzerland. Led by İsmet İnönü, the Ankara delegation set out to negotiate an agreement that would expel occupying forces, reclaim territory, and establish the sovereignty of the new country of Turkey.

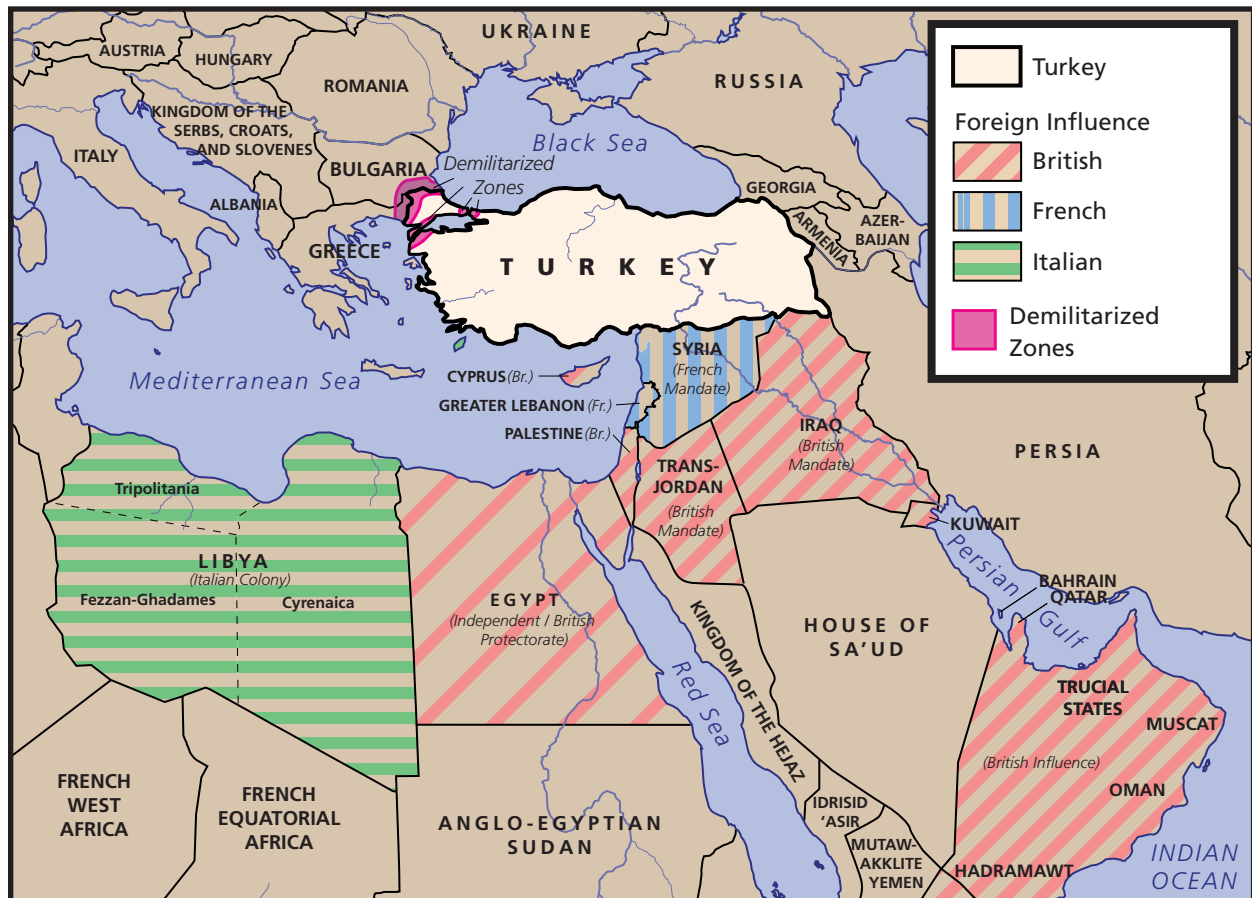
***What terms did Turkey agree to in the Treaty of Lausanne?***

The Treaty of Lausanne, signed in July 1923, restored some of the territory to Turkey that had been taken away by the Treaty of Sèvres. The treaty drew boundaries very similar to the boundaries of modern-day Turkey. The Allies withdrew their occupation forces, and the treaty recognized the government in Ankara to be the official government of Turkey, instead of the Ottoman government in Istanbul.



The Turkish delegation in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1923.

Library of Congress. Division of Prints and Photographs. LC-USZ62-102035.



The Treaty of Lausanne, 1923.

The treaty also called for a massive population exchange, based on religion, across the newly established borders. 400,000 Greek Muslims were forced to move to Turkey, while 1.2 million Orthodox Christians in Turkey were forced to move to Greece. Both the Turkish and Greek governments supported this exchange.

**“From the First of May, 1923 a start will be made with the forced exchange of Turkish citizens of Greek Orthodox faith who live on Turkish soil with the Greek citizens of Muslim faith who live on Greek soil...”**

—The Treaty of Lausanne

**What were the effects of the population exchange?**

The population exchange had dramatic effects on individuals who were uprooted

from their homes and relocated to foreign and unfamiliar places. People were displaced from communities their families had lived in for generations. The transition was difficult for many. For example, some Turkish-speaking Christians were sent to Greece, and Greek-speaking Muslims sent to Turkey.

The exchanges also reshaped the populations of each country more broadly. In 1913, the territory that would become Turkey had a population that was 20 percent Christian. By 1923, this number had decreased to 2.5 percent. The drastic changes brought about by the population exchange followed a longer trend of Anatolia becoming less diverse. During the 1877-1878 war with Russia and the Balkan Wars, hundreds of thousands of Muslim migrants had come to Anatolia, and during World War I, many Christian Greeks and Armenians had fled Anatolia or were killed. A more Muslim and Turkish Anatolia would have lasting



Wikimedia Commons. Public Domain.

Turkish troops enter Istanbul, October 6, 1923.

effects on the cultural and religious landscape of the new country.

***“In a land where Muslims, Christians, and Jews had coexisted since ancient times, the combined effect of war, ethnic cleansing, and the Turkish-Greek population exchanges was to reduce the non-Muslim communities outside Istanbul to vestigial remnants.”***

—Historian Carter Vaughn Findley, 2010

Despite these changes, the new republic was still home to populations of non-Muslim and non-Turkish minorities.

### ***What did Turkey look like in 1923?***

The country of Turkey emerged in 1923, battered by years of war. From the outbreak of World War I in 1914 to Turkish independence in 1923, 20 percent of Anatolia’s population had died from a range of causes, including battle, famine, disease, and genocide. Ten percent more had fled the country and about half of the population had been displaced within Anatolia as refugees. Shortages of food and fuel made life challenging.

The economy had suffered a major blow, and infrastructure was damaged. Defeated Greek armies destroyed railways and bridges as they retreated through western Anatolia. Much of the economy had been dominated by Christians, who worked in industries such as banking, hotels, railways, and cotton and silk production. These industries suffered after much of the Christian population fled or was forcibly displaced.

But Turkey had successfully rejected the demands of World War I’s victors. Having reclaimed its Anatolian heartland and the city of Istanbul, Turkey set out to craft a new government and society.

## Part II: A New Republic

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Immediately after the War of Independence, Mustafa Kemal—who would later take the name Atatürk (which means “father of the Turks”)—began a dramatic transformation of Turkish society.

In the following pages, you will read about Atatürk’s sweeping reforms and efforts to create a modern, unified, and secular (non-religious) country out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire. You will explore the emergence of a multiparty democracy in the 1950s, and periods of social and economic turmoil followed by three military coups in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. You will also examine the Kurdish conflict, which has claimed over 40,000 lives in Turkey.

### Atatürk’s Reforms

In October 1923, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk became the first president of the Turkish Republic. Atatürk was convinced that Turkey had to break from its Ottoman past in order to become a prosperous, thriving, and modern country. Atatürk carried out radical reforms to forge a new government and national identity.

#### ***What were Atatürk’s goals for the new republic?***

Atatürk wanted to create a new national identity in which people saw themselves as Turkish citizens instead of subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Atatürk’s reforms changed the political and legal systems, but also led to broad social changes in education, language, and religion.

***“The name Turk, as a political term, shall be understood to include all citizens of the Turkish Republic, without distinction of, or reference to, race or religion.”***

—Turkish Constitution of 1924, article 88

In March 1924, Atatürk abolished the caliphate (caliph was the title given to the

religious leader of the Islamic world, which had for centuries been held by the Ottoman sultan) and demanded that all members of the Ottoman dynasty leave the country. In April, Turkey adopted a new constitution.

Atatürk was determined to make Turkey more like a European country. The government abolished religious courts, and by 1926, Turkey had adopted a secular legal system. Turkey created a civil code modeled on that of Switzerland, a penal code based on that of Italy, and a commercial code based on those of Italy and Germany.

In the new republic, citizens elected the parliament, known as the Grand National Assembly. The parliament elected the president, and the president appointed the prime minister. For decades to come, the country would be governed by a single party under Atatürk’s leadership, the Republican People’s Party, or Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP).

Despite Atatürk’s charisma and popularity, some citizens of the new republic disagreed with his reforms. The government used a range of tactics to silence those who opposed its policies, from restrictive laws and powerful courts to the deployment of the military to crush rebellions.

#### ***How did Atatürk change the relationship between the government and religious institutions?***

Atatürk wanted to prevent religion from being the basis of the new country’s political system. He believed that the government and its laws should be completely secular, with no religious influence. But while Atatürk believed that religion should be kept out of politics, he did not want the government to stay out of religion.

The late Ottoman Empire had made the education and legal systems more secular and increased government control over religious affairs, but Atatürk took this trend to a new level. In addition to dissolving the caliphate

in 1924, the Turkish government took steps to eliminate the influence of other religious leaders and shut down religious schools and hospitals. In 1925, Turkey amended its High Treason Law to make the political use of religion a crime.

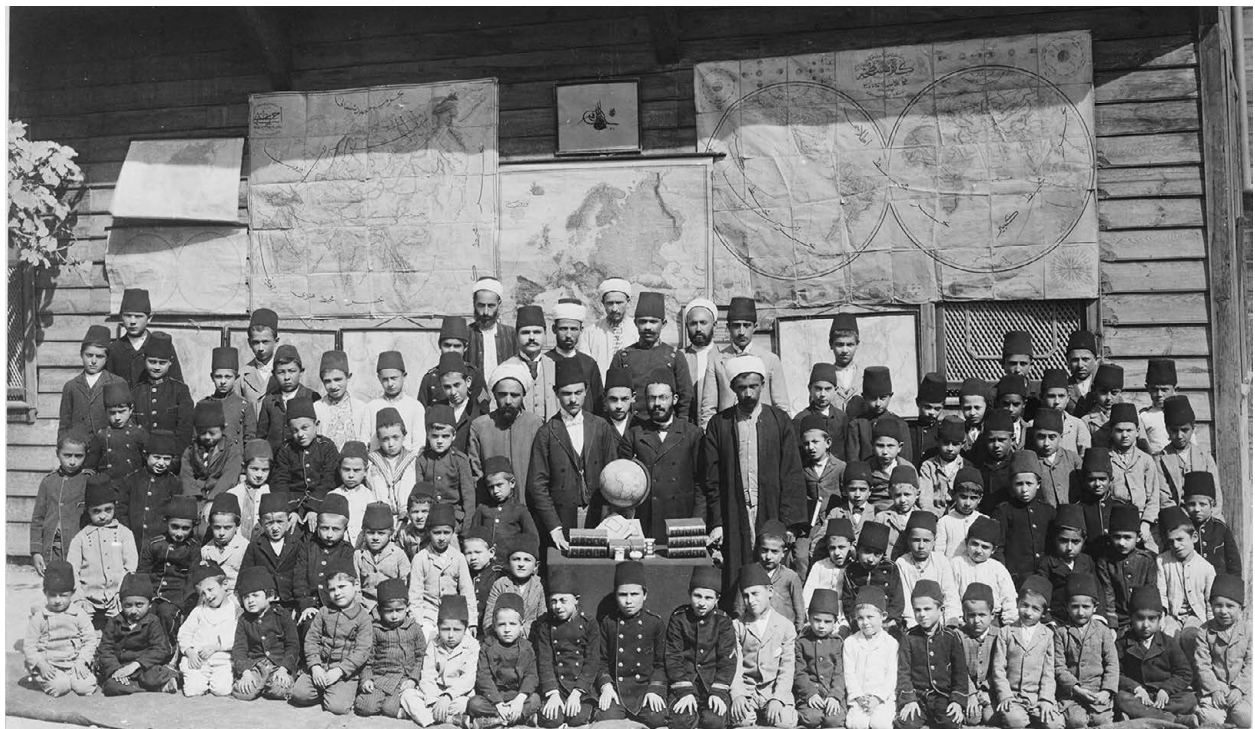
The government also created the Directorate of Religious Affairs, or the Diyanet. The Diyanet, which exists to this day, brought religion under state control. This government office appointed and paid the salaries of imams (Islamic leaders) and other religious figures. The Diyanet oversaw the distribution of religious sermons in the country, and provided schools with approved texts to teach religion. In 1928, the government stripped the clause from the constitution that proclaimed Islam to be the official religion of Turkey, and in 1937, secularism was added to the constitution as a guiding principle of the republic.

While many people embraced Atatürk's changes, others felt disappointed and betrayed by the new policies. Atatürk's religious reforms were not only unpopular with some—particularly in the countryside—they also

came as a surprise. For example, during the War of Independence, Atatürk rallied much of Anatolia's population by proclaiming that the independence struggle would preserve the sultanate and caliphate—positions that he later abolished.

### ***What cultural and political reforms were enacted?***

In addition to modeling parts of the Turkish government after European governments, Atatürk took steps to make Turkish society more like Western countries. For example, women were discouraged from the Islamic practice of veiling, and women working in state institutions were prohibited from wearing a headscarf. In November 1925, the government instituted a hat reform for men. This new policy banned wearing the turban or the fez, a red felt hat common in the Ottoman Empire. It also required government employees to wear a European-style hat. The hat reform created an uproar, and Atatürk used the courts to try opponents of this and other policies.



A group of Turkish students and teachers in 1923. Many are wearing a fez, a hat commonly worn during the Ottoman era. Two years after this photograph was taken, Atatürk banned the fez.

Library of Congress. LC-USZ62-139358.

In the mid-1920s, Turkey adopted the international clock and the European calendar, dropping the Ottoman religious and solar calendars. In 1934, the government proclaimed that all Turks must adopt a family name, and all traditional titles were abolished, such as “bey”(chief), “effendi”(sir/lord), and “hanım”(Mrs.). In 1935, Turkey switched the weekly holiday from Friday, the Islamic holy day, to Sunday.

Atatürk also championed the rights of women to participate more fully in society. He granted women the right to vote and run for office at the municipal level in 1930 and at the national level in 1934. (This was before women achieved these rights in France, Switzerland, and many other countries.) In 1935, eighteen women were elected to the Grand National Assembly. Despite these legal reforms, women still faced long-held traditional views in society on the role of women.

### ***How did Atatürk change the Turkish language?***

In 1928, Atatürk announced that Turkey

would adopt a new alphabet. Ottoman Turkish had been written in Arabic script and for centuries had included many words of Persian and Arabic origin. Atatürk demanded that a new alphabet based on Latin letters be used, and sought to purge the language of “foreign” vocabulary by replacing some of these words with words of Turkish origin. European-style numbers were also introduced.

***“[O]ur rich and harmonious language will now be able to display itself with new Turkish letters. We must free ourselves from these incomprehensible signs, that for centuries have held our minds in an iron vice. You must learn the new Turkish letters quickly.”***

—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

These swift changes created disorder, as many people had difficulty understanding newspaper articles and government documents. But the government sent thousands of young teachers to villages throughout the

## **Kurds in the Republic**

Atatürk’s government denied that Kurds existed as a distinct ethnic group within the new republic. It banned the teaching of the Kurdish language, as well as its use in schools, in print publications, and in public. The government renamed Kurdish cities and towns with Turkish names, and removed references to the region of “Kurdistan” on maps and government documents. These policies shocked Kurds who had been promised autonomy by Atatürk during the War of Independence. It became clear that Atatürk had little interest in granting the Kurds autonomy or independence.

In February 1925, Kurds began a rebellion in eastern Turkey. Participants had varied goals, from the restoration of religious law and the caliphate to greater autonomy and self-rule. In response, the Turkish military swept through Kurdish regions, burning villages, seizing livestock, and massacring thousands. The government forced over twenty thousand Kurds, many of whom had not been involved in the rebellion, to relocate to western Turkey. Although the rebellion was crushed, Kurdish uprisings and resistance continued under Atatürk’s rule, as did harsh government responses.

In 1934, Turkey passed the Settlement Act. This law created geographic zones and outlined a policy of resettling residents to promote “Turkish culture.” Although the law did not explicitly refer to Kurds, it was widely used to uproot Kurds who were concentrated in eastern Turkey. Villages in which Turkish was not the mother language were disbanded, and their residents moved to predominantly Turkish-speaking areas. The forced relocation of minority ethnic groups was not new, but the law provided the legal basis for the expansion of this practice.

country to teach the new alphabet. At this time, the vast majority of the population was illiterate. The new Turkish alphabet more closely matched the sounds of the Turkish language, making it easier for Turkish speakers to learn to read and write.

Atatürk also prohibited Arabic and Persian classes, and banned Kurdish from being spoken in public. In 1932, he required that Turkish be used during the Islamic call to prayer, instead of Arabic.

### ***How did the CHP maintain a tight grasp on its power?***

Atatürk's revolutionary reforms were what he believed were necessary for Turkey to become a modern and prosperous country. He used his power and popularity to persuade the population and push reforms through, and did not shy away from suppressing those who opposed his plans.

Although Atatürk spoke about democracy, the republic was an authoritarian one-party system. The CHP controlled the government, and the Grand National Assembly reelected Atatürk in 1927, 1931, and 1935.

On two occasions (1924 and 1930), Atatürk allowed the formation of other political parties. Neither party lasted more than a few months before being dissolved by the CHP.

### ***“For the people, despite the people.”***

—Motto of the CHP in the early 1930s

In addition to banning opposition parties, the CHP used a variety of measures to silence its critics. Independence Tribunals tried members of the opposition, and those who were arrested were often denied access



Atatürk and his wife, Latife Uşşaki, 1923.

Library of Congress. LC-USZ62-139361.

to lawyers. When the tribunals were closed in 1927, Turkish authorities had arrested over seven thousand people and handed down over six hundred death sentences.

The CHP frequently shut down newspapers and brought journalists to trial if they questioned government policies. In 1933, the government purged universities of professors who were critical of the ruling party, an act that the government would carry out repeatedly in the coming decades. In 1936, the



Statues of Atatürk were placed along boulevards and public squares to celebrate his role in the War of Independence. The picture above shows the Victory Monument (created in 1927) in Ankara, 1935.

government seized control of all private radio stations.

### ***What was life like in Turkey during the early years of the republic?***

The early republic focused mainly on its domestic economic development and recovery from World War I and the War of Independence. The human toll of these conflicts was great. Between 1914 and 1927, the population within the region had declined from 16.3 million to 13.6 million. The loss of male adults during the wars had a significant negative effect on the economy. Literacy levels were also low; only 11 percent could read or write in 1927. In 1924, Turkey had about one thousand doctors. Life expectancy was low and averaged only thirty-eight years by 1950.

Turkey was a largely agrarian society, and agricultural production had plummeted during wartime as farmers left for battle and crops and livestock perished. During the first few years after independence, agriculture rebounded quickly. Nearly 80 percent of Turkey's

working population lived in the countryside and worked in agriculture, in part because it was a way to ensure they had access to food.

The Turkish government sought to move toward a more industrial economy. It took back control of industries that had been managed by European countries during Ottoman rule, for example, the railroad system and the tobacco industry. The government also began programs to strengthen the education system.

The Great Depression, a severe global economic crisis, struck Turkey hard in the 1930s. Like other countries worldwide, the Turkish government responded by nationalizing, or taking ownership of, major industries and businesses. State-owned companies producing iron, steel, textiles, telegraph and telephone systems, and other goods and services employed Turkish workers. The government placed a high tax on foreign goods to shield Turkish businesses from competition and encourage people to buy goods produced within the country.

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### ***What was Turkey's foreign policy following independence?***

Turkey's foreign policy was cautious under Atatürk. Atatürk wanted to focus on developing Turkey's economy and to avoid creating any impression that he planned to rebuild the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the Turkish government sought to avoid foreign conflict and wanted good relationships with its neighbors, including the Soviet Union. For most of World War II, Turkey devoted its diplomatic efforts to staying out of the fighting. In February 1945, Turkey declared war on Nazi Germany, in part because doing so made it eligible to become a founding member of the United Nations (UN).



Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs Hasan Saka signs the UN Charter, signaling Turkey's entry into the international organization. June 26, 1945.

### **Democratic Change**

At the end of World War II, the public began to demand a greater voice in politics. In January 1946, the government allowed the Democrat Party (DP) to form as an opposition party. The DP was a more religious party that drew support primarily from rural areas. The CHP was startled by the DP's popularity throughout the country.

The CHP rigged the 1946 elections, limiting the DP's success at the polls. The fraudulent elections caused a public outcry, and hostility between the parties soared. President İsmet İnönü—the first president to serve following Atatürk's death in 1938—intervened. He reiterated his support for a multiparty system and called for cooperation between the opposition and those in power.

***“The result I seek is the institution of confidence between the parties. This is necessary for the security of the country. The opposition will work without fear of being closed down by the party in power; the government will be secure that the opposition demands nothing beyond its legal rights; the citizens will be confident in seeking the possibility of the transfer of power from one party to another. ...I ask for genuine cooperation between the leaders of the opposition and government parties.”***

—President İsmet İnönü, July 12, 1947

### ***When did Turkey have its first free and fair multiparty elections?***

In the elections of 1950, the Democrat Party achieved a landslide victory. It won 54

percent of the vote and 408 seats in parliament, while the former ruling party, the CHP, won just under 40 percent of the vote and gained only 69 seats. These were the first free and fair multiparty elections in Turkey's history. After twenty-seven years in power, the CHP respected the result of the elections and peacefully transferred power to the opposition.

***“Enough! Now the people have their say.”***

—slogan of the Democrat Party, victor of the 1950 elections

### ***How did the Cold War affect Turkey?***

While there was pressure from within Turkey for democratic reform, developments in the international community also had important effects on Turkey's political transformation and its relationship to the world.

After World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union began a global struggle for power and influence known as the Cold War that lasted for forty years. The United States adopted a policy of containing the spread of Soviet communism around the world. Turkey played an important role in the opening chapter of the U.S. struggle against the Soviet Union.

U.S. President Harry S. Truman (1945-53) was concerned about Soviet influence in Greece and Turkey. The Greek government was embroiled in a civil war against the Greek Communist Party, and the United States feared Soviet involvement. Truman was also worried



A Turkish woman casting her vote at a polling booth in an Istanbul suburb during Turkey's first free multiparty elections in 1950.

Library of Congress. LC-USZ62-93428.

that the Soviet Union might invade Turkey. The Soviets had demanded military bases in the Turkish straits and wanted control over territory in eastern Turkey. (Turkey shared a land border with the Soviet Union, and the two countries faced each other across the Black Sea.)

In 1947, Truman asked the U.S. Congress to commit \$400 million in aid to Turkey and Greece. Truman also announced that the United States would oppose “the subjugation of free peoples” anywhere in the world, not

just Turkey and Greece. This would become known as the Truman Doctrine.

***“The future of Turkey as an independent and economically sound state is clearly no less important to the freedom-loving peoples of the world than the future of Greece.... Turkey now needs our support.”***

—U.S. President Harry S. Truman,  
March 12, 1947

Turkey also received aid through another U.S. foreign aid program, known as the Marshall Plan. In March 1948, Congress approved funding to help European countries recover from the devastation of World War II. U.S. policy makers believed strengthening the economies of Europe, including Turkey, would be the best way to fend off Soviet attempts to dominate the region.

### ***How did Turkey’s foreign policy align with the United States and Western Europe?***

In addition to receiving aid from the United States after World War II, Turkey took additional steps to align itself with the United States and Western Europe. Turkey was a founding member of the United Nations in 1945, and in 1947 joined the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It also sought membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance forged in 1949 by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to defend against Soviet aggression. When the Korean War broke out in 1950, Turkey was one of the first countries to announce that it would commit troops to UN forces in the country. This helped Turkey gain admission to NATO in 1952.

During the 1950s, the United States and NATO expanded their military bases in Turkey. These bases were of great strategic importance to the United States and NATO because of their close proximity to the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Throughout the Cold War, Turkey’s foreign policy remained closely aligned with that of the United States.

### ***What changes did Turkey experience in the 1950s?***

In 1950, over 77 percent of the population worked in agriculture. The Democrat Party distributed state land for farming, and used funds from the Marshall Plan to buy tractors. These changes, along with good weather and growing conditions, led to increased agricultural productivity in the early 1950s. A drought in the mid-1950s made life challenging for farmers, and many moved to urban areas in search of jobs in factories. Turks also began migrating to Europe, particularly to Germany, in search of employment—a trend that would accelerate during the 1960s and 1970s.

The DP also built roads that connected rural areas to cities. Some newcomers to cities set up makeshift houses on the outskirts of town, called *gecekondus*, which means “built in a night.” Many of these settlements lacked access to sewers, clean water, and electricity. By the end of the 1950s, cities and towns were growing at a rate of 10 percent a year.

The DP also allowed religion to play a more visible role in public life. It opened new religious schools, permitted the call to prayer in Arabic again (instead of Turkish), and allowed thousands of mosques to reopen.

## **Political Upheaval**

Between 1948 and 1965, the United States provided \$2.5 billion in military aid to Turkey and an additional \$1.5 billion in economic aid. The military became increasingly important and powerful in society. Turkish military officers were highly trained and educated. They saw themselves as protectors of the republic against external threats. As Turkey entered the 1960s, military leaders turned their attention to what they believed were internal challenges to Atatürk’s legacy and the republic.

### ***Why did the Turkish military seize control of the government in 1960?***

Toward the end of the 1950s, the Democrat Party had become increasingly unpopular. Worsening economic conditions fueled public discontent and the DP became more authoritarian.

In May 1960, a small group of military officers took control of the country in a coup d'état. The military feared that the DP was straying from secularism and that the authoritarian measures the party used to govern would lead to further instability. The military was also concerned that Prime Minister Adnan Menderes was seeking closer ties with the Soviet Union, the Cold War rival of Turkey's NATO allies.

In Ankara and Istanbul, where the government had been particularly unpopular, many Turks celebrated the news of the coup. The military dissolved the Democrat Party and arrested hundreds of its members. Prime Minister Menderes, his foreign minister, and his finance minister were sent to the gallows and executed.

After the coup, there was a division within the military. Some officers wanted the military to maintain control of the country. But the

majority believed that they should not play an extended role in politics, and that power should be handed back to civilians. Many agreed that more than just a change in political leadership was necessary, and that Turkey should draft a new constitution.

### ***What were the legacies of the 1960 coup?***

In 1961, the military put into place a new constitution. The constitution added a second chamber (called the senate) to the legislature, created a broader system of checks and balances, and included a bill of civil liberties that expanded the rights of Turkish citizens. In contrast to the constitution of 1924, the 1961 constitution called for multiple political parties and provided protections for opposition groups. The new constitution broke the tradition of single-party rule and strengthened Turkey's multiparty democracy, a system that exists to this day.



Soldiers and military trucks at the edge of a crowd outside the Bayezid II Mosque in Istanbul. This photo was taken on June 8, 1960, days after the military seized power in a coup on May 27.

Library of Congress. LC-DIG-ppmsca-22272.

The constitution also carved out a larger role for the military in government policy making. A new National Security Council—which was led by the president and included the prime minister and leaders of the army, navy, air force, and national police—allowed the military to advise the government on matters of domestic and international security. Over the course of the following decades, the military would use this council to expand its influence over government policy.

The 1960 coup had lasting effects on Turkey. Not only did it drastically reshape the country's constitution and government, but it also created a precedent of military involvement in politics. The coup established a reputation for the military in the eyes of the people as a guardian of the republic. The coming decades would be marked by political and social turmoil, and the military would intervene directly in politics multiple times. After each intervention, the military returned control to a civilian government.

### ***Why did the military intervene in politics in 1971?***

Following the elections of 1961, the military relinquished control to a civilian government. The new constitution and return to civilian rule created a more open political climate. With new protections for a multiparty system, a wide range of political parties attempted to participate in government. (Some religious parties were shut down for violating the secular provisions of the constitution.) At the same time, violent clashes occurred between nationalist groups on the right and socialist and communist parties on the left. An economic downturn in the late 1960s added to the growing turmoil. Workers staged protests to voice their concerns. Violence plagued the streets and university campuses.

In 1971, the military stepped in and carried out a second coup. One of its main goals was to subdue the political violence. Unlike the 1960 coup, the military did not eject the government from power or take direct control, but left politicians in office and closely guided the policies of the country. They amended the constitution to expand the president's power

and limited civil liberties and free speech. The military strengthened the role of the National Security Council, and set up State Security Courts with military judges.

The military declared martial law in several provinces. Cold War concerns about communism led the military to wage a “counter-guerilla” campaign against leftist and communist groups. The military handed control back to elected politicians in 1973, but the political and social upheaval intensified throughout the rest of the decade.

### ***Why did the military take full control of the country again in 1980?***

Similar to the 1960s, the 1970s was a period of political instability. Turkey changed prime ministers eleven times and the government struggled to respond to political divisions that became increasingly violent. Bombings and shootings were commonplace, particularly on university campuses, in the slums of Ankara and Istanbul, and in Kurdish regions in the East.

Economic issues were a major contributor to the unrest. The global economic recession of the 1970s struck Turkey hard. Unemployment soared, and many recent college graduates could not find work. In the late 1970s, inflation surged. In 1979, the price of oil more than doubled, and energy shortages affected the daily lives of people throughout Turkey.

Political disagreements prevented the Grand National Assembly from dealing with the economic issues facing Turkey. In 1980, the Assembly was unable to elect a president after 115 attempts at voting. The government was paralyzed and unable to maintain law and order; the country teetered on the verge of economic collapse.

On September 12, 1980, the military staged its third coup in two decades. The military announced that it was taking control because the government was incapable of ruling the country. At the time of the coup, dozens of civilians were being killed each day in street violence, and the death toll of the prior year surpassed two thousand.

***How did the military exert its control over the country?***

The military dissolved the parliament, removed mayors and other political leaders from office, and banned the existing political parties. Within the first year of military rule, over one hundred thousand people were arrested, from politicians and lawyers to teachers and journalists.

The military targeted those it suspected of committing violence or terrorism. Torture was widely used against those who were detained and interrogated. Hundreds died while detained, and dozens were executed. Many were “disappeared” or exiled. The military took additional steps to freeze political activity. Many people were arrested or fired from their jobs because they expressed communist opinions. The military shut down newspapers, and in June 1981, it banned all public political discussions and organizing.

Much of the public felt a general sense of relief when the military took control. The military intervention effectively brought an end to the street violence that had plagued the country for years. At the same time, the military’s violent and antidemocratic tactics deeply troubled many.

***Why did the military change Turkey’s constitution?***

Many military leaders blamed the 1961 constitution for Turkey’s social and political turmoil. They believed that for the government to be effective and maintain law and order, its authority had to be strengthened. The military appointed a committee to draft a new constitution. In November 1982, all citizens were required to vote in a nationwide ballot on the proposed constitution, but the military banned all criticism of it prior to the vote. Over 90 percent of voters voted in favor of the constitution.

The constitution abolished the senate (returning Turkey to a unicameral legislature) and expanded the power of the president, giving the president the right to dissolve the Assembly. It included a provision that General Evren, the military leader who had led

the country during the period of military rule, would automatically serve one seven-year term as president. The new constitution strengthened the role of the National Security Council, which granted more power to the military to exercise control over government policy. It also rolled back many of the rights and liberties that the previous constitution had granted Turkish citizens. For example, political activity based on class, religious sect, language, or race was prohibited. This was intended to limit the activities of Kurdish nationalists, communists, and Islamist groups (groups that wanted Islam to influence society and the law). New political parties could only be formed with the approval of the National Security Council.

***How did the military hand power back to a civilian government?***

For the third time since 1960, the military relinquished control of the government and allowed three parties to compete in elections in November 1983. The party most closely linked with the military received the smallest percentage of votes. The Motherland Party, led by Turgut Özal, won a solid victory at the polls, despite the fact that the military had discouraged voters from supporting this party. Prime Minister Özal played the most important role in the government, but the military retained power in the years to come through its role in the National Security Council and through its temporary hold on the presidency—General Evren remained president until 1989.

**The Kurdish Conflict**

Throughout Turkey’s history, government leaders, including Atatürk, have viewed Kurdish nationalism as a threat to the unity of the republic. The government has enacted policies and laws to suppress Kurdish nationalism. Several of these laws were passed during periods of military rule.

***What types of policies did the military enact after the three coups?***

Following all three coups, the military



Kurds make up about 20 percent of Turkey's population with concentrations in eastern and southeastern regions. Significant Kurdish populations also live in the neighboring countries of Iran, Iraq, Armenia, and Syria.

passed a range of harsh measures against Kurds. For example, after the 1960 coup, parents were banned from giving their children Kurdish names. The political and cultural repression of Kurds reached new levels after the 1980 coup. Speaking or publishing materials in Kurdish was seen by the military as an act of resistance.

***“It is forbidden to use as a mother tongue any language other than Turkish and to carry, at public gatherings and assemblies, placards, banners, signs, boards, posters and the like, written in a language other than Turkish.”***

—Law 2932, October 1983

### **How did Kurdish resistance take shape?**

In the early 1960s, Kurds increasingly took to the streets to protest their treatment. Activists argued that Kurds had participated in the War of Independence, but decades later, had still not been granted the same rights as other citizens.

***“We will not be daunted, we will not be intimidated. We will contend until the end for the realization of our constitutional rights in full. When we achieve our rights we gain dignity and self respect.... Being Kurdish is not a crime.”***

—Mehmet Sözer, Kurdish activist, August 24, 1969

The government banned all known Kurdish political parties, and political leaders often faced arrest and brutality. In spite of this repression, Kurdish political organizing continued, often in secret, in the 1970s and 1980s.

### **What led to the creation of the militant Kurdish political group called the PKK?**

The government's repression of Kurdish political activism led to the creation of a group called the Kurdistan Worker's Party, or *Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan* (PKK) in 1978. The PKK's founder Abdullah Öcalan wanted to create an independent, communist state for Kurds in southeastern Turkey. In 1984, the PKK

launched an armed rebellion against the Turkish government.

The PKK's insurgency attracted thousands of supporters who used guns, grenades, and landmines to attack government sites, police, and Kurds who collaborated with the government.

In towns where the PKK seized control, it set up its own administration separate from the Turkish government, held trials outside of the official court system, and collected taxes from businesses to fund its operations. It also funded its activities through illegal smuggling of heroin and weapons, and from the financial support of Kurdish populations living outside of Turkey. The PKK had bases and guerilla training camps in several neighboring countries, including Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Iran.

### ***How did the government respond to the PKK?***

The Turkish military carried out “scorched earth” campaigns in thousands of Kurdish villages—evacuating and destroying towns, killing livestock, and setting fire to fields and homes. As the military swept through towns, it rounded up and arrested residents. It often made little distinction between the insurgents and civilians it considered to be sympathizers of the PKK. Turkish forces frequently beat and tortured those in custody to elicit confessions of supporting the PKK.

The conflict strained relations between the Turkish government and its neighbors, especially those with Kurdish populations of their own. Tensions ran high with Syria, which provided a safe haven for Öcalan and allowed PKK bases within its territory. On several occasions, the Turkish government launched attacks against PKK bases in northern Iraq.

## **The Anti-Terror Law**

Many of the actions of the PKK during the civil war fell under international definitions of terrorism. As of 2014, the European Union, NATO, Turkey, the United States, and several other countries continue to classify the PKK as a terrorist organization.

In 1991, as the war in the East ramped up, the Turkish parliament passed the Anti-Terror Law. It defined terrorism broadly, and although it did not explicitly address the Kurdish conflict, its focus on acts “damaging the indivisible unity of the state” could easily be applied to Kurdish separatists. In addition to criminalizing violent terrorist acts, the law also placed limitations on certain types of writing, speech, and gatherings.

The Anti-Terror Law opened up the door for authorities to prosecute not only PKK militants, but also many citizens who did not participate directly in the conflict. For example, the state prosecuted for “terrorist activity” several professors and journalists who denounced government involvement in Kurdish regions, as well as activists that pressed for cultural rights for Kurds. In effect, the law criminalized things such as discussion of the PKK, criticism of the government's human rights abuses, or writing about Kurdish identity.

***“During 1992, scores of journalists, editors and writers were beaten, interrogated, tortured, charged, tried and sometimes convicted for what they had written, edited or published in Turkey. Most were charged under the very broad Anti-Terror Law for such offenses as ‘criticizing’ or ‘insulting’ the president, public officers, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk or the military;...‘praising a terrorist organization’; or spreading ‘separatist propaganda.’”***

—Human Rights Watch, 1993 World Report

The Anti-Terror Law exists to this day. Although it has been amended, it continues to stir controversy. Critics claim that the government uses the law to silence opposition within Turkey.

### ***How did Kurdish civilians respond to the conflict?***

Not all Kurds supported the PKK. Sixty-five thousand Kurds worked for the government as “village guards” to fight the PKK insurgency.

Others sympathized with or joined the PKK, frustrated by years of political oppression and economic hardship, and angered by the government’s brutal tactics.

Still others felt trapped in the middle of the conflict—neither the PKK nor the Turkish government ensured their safety. In many cases, bystanders were threatened and forced to join a side. Hundreds of thousands of civilians fled their villages, and large numbers migrated to other cities within Turkey (such as Adana, Diyarbakır, İzmir, and Istanbul) and abroad.

Although the Turkish government described the conflict with the PKK as simply the “southeastern problem,” in fact, Turkey had descended into civil war.

### ***Why did the civil war wind down?***

By the early 1990s, the Turkish military had committed a quarter of a million troops to the conflict. At the same time, the PKK’s goals started to shift. Moving away from the objective of a separate Kurdish state, the PKK focused on obtaining greater autonomy and rights for Kurds within Turkey.

Turkish forces captured Öcalan in Kenya in February 1999, after he had fled from Syria to Greece, and then to Italy. Some suspect that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency played a role in his capture. Öcalan was tried and found guilty of treason. From his prison cell, he called for PKK insurgents to retreat from Turkey and to begin the process of reconciliation.

***“The democratic option is the only alternative to solving the Kurdish question. Separation is neither possible nor necessary. We want peace, dialogue, and free political action within the framework of a democratic Turkish state.”***

—Abdullah Öcalan, during his 1999 trial

In August 1999, the PKK declared a ceasefire and started to withdraw its forces across Turkey, many retreating to bases in Iraq. Tensions between the PKK and the government exist to this day, and violence continues intermittently.

### ***What have been the costs of the Kurdish conflict?***

The greatest cost of the Kurdish conflict has been the tremendous loss of human life—over forty thousand people—and the displacement, violence, and trauma experienced by many more. The conflict also damaged the economy; agriculture suffered and tourism plummeted. By end of the 1990s, the Turkish military was spending \$10 billion on the conflict each year.

The conflict also heightened tensions with Turkey’s neighbors and with Europe. For example, the European Union (EU) voiced criticism of Turkey’s human rights record. Beginning in 1996, the European Court of Human Rights found Turkey guilty of a range of offenses, from torture to unlawful killings. The Kurdish conflict presented an obstacle to Turkey’s efforts to join the European Union. To this day, Kurdish families are seeking justice for the disappearances, deaths, and torture of their loved ones.

## Part III: Turkey Today

**T**urkey has undergone tremendous changes in the past thirty years. Its economy has grown dramatically and prompted a flood of people to move from the countryside to cities, a process known as urbanization. New political movements have emerged that challenge Atatürk's vision of a secular state. Social movements have grown, calling for greater rights for the poor, ethnic and religious minorities, and women. Protests, both in support of and against the government, have boiled over in the streets. In the midst of this, Turkey's relationship with its neighbors and its role in the world is shifting.

Today, there is a vigorous debate in Turkey about the future. In the coming pages, you will have a chance to consider different issues that shape this debate. When you finish your reading, you will recreate the discussion in Turkey with your classmates.

### A New Economic and Political Landscape

The 1980s and 1990s brought changes to Turkey—economic reforms, migration, new political parties, and a shifting relationship between the military and government. These transformations continue to shape Turkish society today.

#### *How did changes in government policies contribute to economic growth?*

In the 1980s, the government implemented sweeping economic reforms that opened Turkey to foreign investment, ideas, and technologies. Many of these changes were spearheaded by Turgut Özal, who served as prime minister (1983-89) and president (1989-1993).

In addition to increasing people's access to foreign-made goods, Özal's policies focused on integrating Turkey's regional industries, businesses, and workers into the global economy. For example, family-owned manufacturing

firms for textiles, clothing, leather, and glass in smaller cities were given incentives to expand and reach markets abroad. The Turkish press began calling these businesses and the cities where they were located the "Anatolian Tigers," a nickname meant to distinguish them from the commercial hubs of Ankara and Istanbul. Many state-owned industries were also sold to private owners during this time.

These changes had noticeable effects. As the quality of Turkish goods increased, annual exports doubled to \$10.2 billion between 1984 and 1987. A thriving tourism industry also emerged in the late 1980s, transforming Turkey into a top destination for international travelers.

#### *How did Turkey's growing economy lead people to migrate to cities?*

Turkey's economic growth is closely tied to another trend—urbanization. In the last three decades, people have left rural areas to seek jobs and higher standards of living in Turkey's cities. Today, nearly three in four people live in cities, compared to only half of the population in 1985.

The government views urban development as one of its top policy priorities. In the 1920s, Turkey's leaders, including Atatürk, viewed the growth of cities as a necessary step to modernize Turkey. After World War II, large numbers of farmers seeking employment moved to cities, especially Ankara and Istanbul. The trend has continued since then. Experts predict that it is likely to continue until 90 percent of the population lives in cities.

Throughout Turkey's history, cities have often lacked adequate housing, jobs, and public services to absorb all of the newcomers, especially low-wage earners. As a result, many migrants have rapidly built and occupied makeshift homes, called *gecekondu*s, on the outskirts of cities. By the late 1990s, half of the populations in the three largest cities—Ankara, Istanbul, and İzmir—lived in *gecekondu*s.

Photographs by Susannah Bechtel.



Left: View of Istanbul. Right: *Gecekondu*s outside of Istanbul. March 2013.

Today, an estimated twelve million people live in these vast settlements.

As *gecekondu*s continue to expand, income, health, and safety remain concerns for many residents. Some who settle on the outskirts of cities are unemployed and many others take low-paying jobs that require long commutes to the city center. Many *gecekondu*s are situated in areas without running water or electricity.

### ***How did economic changes lead to new political developments?***

In addition to rapid economic growth, the 1980s brought new political openings to Turkish society. The spread of satellite dishes gave people access to television programs from Europe and Turkey. Public debate increased as new ideas spread about religion, culture, and politics.

Economic changes, particularly the rise of the Anatolian Tigers, brought prosperity to a new class of entrepreneurs, many of whom were devout business owners that lived outside of Turkey's major cities. As this growing

class of more conservative Muslim entrepreneurs gained economic power, they began to challenge the political control that had for decades been held by more secular and urban elites. Socially conservative and religious political parties appeared on the scene.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, a political party called the Welfare Party became increasingly popular. The Welfare Party built a strong base of support by focusing on the economic and social concerns of the growing population in cities. It won a number of mayoral elections, and by 1995 was the most popular party in Turkey, winning over 21 percent of the vote. (In Turkey's parliamentary system, multiple parties share power. The party with the largest percentage of votes—in this case, 21 percent—leads the government either as a single party or as part of a coalition.)

The Welfare Party's success was largely the result of its grassroots organizing and campaign against government corruption. The party also drew support from voters who wanted Islamic values to inform policy making.

***Why did the military eject the Welfare Party from power?***

The Welfare Party troubled many military leaders in Turkey who considered its focus on Islam to be a threat to Turkish secularism. For example, the Welfare Party proposed lifting the ban on headscarves in public institutions, and planned to construct a mosque in Taksim Square, a public space in Istanbul that features a monument of Atatürk. It also sought to build closer ties with other Muslim-majority countries in the region, including Iran, which had an Islamist government. (Islamist governments want Islam to influence society and the law.)

On February 28, 1997, the military ordered Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan of the Welfare Party to resign. By June, he had stepped down from power. Because the military did not use force, the ousting of Erbakan is often called a “soft coup.” This was the fourth time in Turkey’s history that the military directly intervened in Turkish politics and caused a change in leadership. On January 16, 1998, the Constitutional Court shut down the Welfare Party, charging that the party had violated the secular nature of the state. Erbakan was banned from politics.

***How did the AKP rise to power in Turkey?***

Members of the Welfare Party formed the Virtue Party in February 1998, but the Constitutional Court banned the party within three years. In 2001, a new party emerged called the Justice and Development Party, or Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP). The party was founded by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (pronounced AIR-doh-wan), a former member of the Welfare Party who achieved great popularity while

mayor of Istanbul from 1994-1998. Erdoğan was jailed for ten months in 1998 for reciting a religious poem that, in the opinion of the courts, sought to establish an Islamic state.

The AKP initially distanced itself from the Islamist politics of its predecessors. Instead, the AKP identified as a “conservative democratic” party, a title it still carries to this day.

In the 2002 election campaign, the AKP ran on a platform of challenging corruption, ending poverty, and providing social services to the population. At the time, Turkey was struggling with a financial crisis. Much of the population was disillusioned by rampant political corruption and frustrated by the government’s inability to meet the basic needs of the public. For example, the government’s ineffective response to the disastrous 1999 earthquake, which claimed thousands of lives in northwestern Turkey, was fresh in the memory of many voters.

The AKP won a landslide election in November 2002, claiming over 34 percent of the vote. Erdoğan became prime minister in 2003, and remains prime minister as of June 2014 alongside president Abdullah Gül. The AKP has become more popular during its time in power, winning 47 percent of the vote in 2007 and nearly 50 percent in 2011.

Throughout the AKP’s rule, the CHP (the party created by Atatürk) has been the main opposition party. It won the vote of just over a quarter of the population in the 2011 elections. Looking ahead, people in Turkey wonder whether other parties will be able to challenge the AKP’s grasp on power.

**The Constitutional Court and the AKP**

Since it was established in 1962, Turkey’s Constitutional Court has shut down more than two dozen political parties, primarily for violating the principle of secularism, supporting communist ideas, or threatening national unity by having a pro-Kurdish stance. In July 2008, the Constitutional Court came within one vote of banning the AKP and over seventy of its members, including Prime Minister Erdoğan and President Abdullah Gül. Prosecutors accused the party of violating secularism and planning to create an Islamic state. Evidence included the party’s efforts to lift the ban on women wearing a headscarf at public universities. Instead of shutting down the AKP, the court issued financial penalties and a warning.



An AKP campaign banner for the 2011 elections, featuring Prime Minister Erdoğan.

### ***How has the AKP challenged the military's power?***

In recent years, the Turkish government under the leadership of the AKP has sought to limit the military's political influence. The government changed the makeup of the National Security Council by adding more civilian members. It also limited the role of Turkey's military in maintaining internal security. For example, the government decreased the military's role in addressing the Kurdish conflict and granted greater authority to the national police. The AKP has taken several steps to expand civilian oversight of security forces—it enacted legal changes so that members of the military are tried in civilian courts instead of military courts for certain crimes, and it expanded parliament's oversight of the defense budget.

### ***How has the prosecution of military leaders stirred controversy in Turkey?***

In a move unprecedented in Turkey's history, the AKP has brought hundreds of military officers to trial. For example, in 2012, it

brought former military general and president Kenan Evren to trial for his role in organizing the 1980 coup and the imprisonment, execution, and torture of Turkish citizens during the period of military rule. In 2014, Turkish courts sentenced the ninety-six-year-old former general to life in prison.

Beginning in 2007, the AKP tried hundreds of officers for conspiring to overthrow Erdoğan and the ruling party. Many of the high-ranking military officers, along with politicians, journalists, and academics, were prosecuted for their involvement in Ergenekon, an alleged underground secular, ultranationalist network. Prosecutors charged that the group planned to carry out assassinations, bomb mosques and public spaces, and shoot down a Turkish military jet (placing the blame on Greece), all to create chaotic conditions that would pave the way for a military takeover.

Public opinion on the trials is varied. Some Turkish citizens view the trials as a triumph for democracy, and are pleased that the

AKP has issued a warning to the military to stay out of politics. They welcome the AKP's efforts to break Turkey's long tradition of military intervention.

***“I believe the Ergenekon case and trial gives an end to the coup d'état culture in Turkey.... It sends a very strong message to any person who may be planning or wishing to stage a coup d'état.”***

—Orhan Kemal Cengiz,  
human rights lawyer, 2013

Others are outraged by the trials, and believe that the AKP has launched an attack against the military in order to concentrate the party's power and reduce the challenge the military poses to creating a more Islamic state. For example, several members of the CHP, which has a long history of close ties to the military and a commitment to secularism, spoke out against the trials. Critics within Turkey and abroad have also raised concerns that the accused did not receive due process and that evidence used in the trials was fabricated.

***“People who don't vote for the AKP are unanimous that Ergenekon was not justice, it was revenge.”***

—Attila Yeşilada, political analyst, 2013

## Foreign Relations

Turkey's economic and political transformation has had far-reaching effects, both within its borders and on the world stage.

***What do Turkey's leaders envision for their country's future role in the international community?***

Turkey has experienced an economic boom—between 2002 and 2012, Turkey's economy grew by 230 percent. This growth has enabled Turkey to become the world's sixteenth largest economy with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$786 billion. In the last decade, income per person has tripled, reaching over \$10,000. The government's goal

is for Turkey to become one of the world's ten strongest economies, and to reach a GDP of \$2 trillion and a per capita income of \$25,000, all by 2023. That year will be the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Turkish Republic. These goals are part of a far-reaching plan called “Vision 2023.”

***“Our country has the potential to be one of the greatest powers of its region and the world. We will continue to advance toward our 2023 targets and build Turkey's future....”***

—Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan,  
October 1, 2012

Foreign policy is also a part of Vision 2023. Turkey's evolving foreign policy reflects its increasing economic strength, its changing domestic politics, and a growing confidence about its role in international affairs.

***“...[Turkey] will continue to strive for regional integration, in the form of security and economic cooperation... [and] will seek to play an influential role in regional conflict resolution.... it will play a determining role in international organizations and become one of the top 10 largest economies in the world. ...Turkey must make progress in all directions and in every field, take an interest in every issue related to global stability, and contribute accordingly.”***

—Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet  
Davutoğlu, May 20, 2010

***How do Kurds affect Turkey's foreign policy?***

One of Turkey's most important domestic issues spills over its borders and affects Turkey's foreign policy. Fifteen million Kurds make up about 20 percent of Turkey's population. Another fifteen million Kurds live in the neighboring countries of Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Armenia. These thirty million Kurds are the largest national group in the world without its own country.

For decades, negotiations have attempted to end the bloody conflict between the Turkish government and Kurdish groups. In 2013, Prime Minister Erdoğan and jailed PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan declared another ceasefire between the PKK and the military, and announced a forthcoming peace agreement. While PKK fighters have retreated to the Kurdish regions of Iraq, a peace settlement has yet to be revealed. Some Kurds question whether the government's new stance was meant to persuade voters in the 2014 elections. They are anxious to see if Erdoğan will keep his promise of a peace deal following the elections.

Turkey's economic interests have also increased the government's cooperation with Kurds in the region. For example, a deal with the Iraqi Kurdish regional government to ship oil through Turkey is one indicator of changing attitudes.

### ***Why does Turkey want to join the European Union?***

Turkey's interest in increasing cooperation in the region is connected to a long-standing plan to join the European Union (EU). The European Union is made up of twenty-eight countries that share a set of laws and standards that simplify economic activity. Goods, people, and money can move freely within the EU. With nearly 500 million inhabitants, it is one of the largest economies in the world.

Turkey began talks to join the EU in 1999, but the EU required that Turkey take steps to harmonize its laws with those of the EU in many areas. The EU has consistently placed pressure on Turkey to address its human rights issues, particularly in relation to the govern-



A PKK fighter in the mountains of Iraq in 2008. PKK members regularly cross the borders in the region and are a serious security concern for Turkey.

James Gordon (CC BY 2.0).

ment's treatment of Kurds. Turkey has carried out many reforms; for example, it abolished the death penalty in 2004. The EU has also encouraged Turkey's efforts to bring the military under greater civilian control.

Progress on Turkey's admission to the EU has stalled. While the Turkish government remains committed to joining, Turkish public opinion in favor of membership has dropped as progress has slowed.

Several European countries are opposed to admitting Turkey to the EU. Turkey's crack-down on the media, continued human rights concerns, and an unresolved dispute over Cyprus—an island country in the Mediterranean—are issues that some European countries object to when considering Turkey's EU membership. Some people in Turkey believe that an unspoken European objection stems from European resistance to the idea of admitting a Muslim-majority country to their union of Christian-majority countries, and from a fear of an influx of Muslim workers that Turkey's EU membership might bring.

### ***What are the origins of the conflict over the island of Cyprus?***

Turkey and Greece have been locked in disputes dating back to Greece's fight for

independence from Ottoman rule in the 1820s. The disputes have involved Cyprus, territories in the Aegean Sea, and the fact that PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was carrying a Greek passport when he was captured in 1999.

The dispute over Cyprus has its origins in the often-tense and distrustful relationship between Greece and Turkey, both members of NATO.

In 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus in response to a coup there sponsored by the Greek military. Since then, the island has been divided into two parts with UN peacekeepers patrolling the border. The southern part is called the Republic of Cyprus and the northern part is the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. (Turkey is the only country in the world that recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.) The Republic of Cyprus is a member of the European Union, but Turkey refuses to formally recognize or trade with it—an issue that will have to be resolved prior to Turkey gaining EU membership. Diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation have continued, but have failed to produce a resolution.

Nevertheless, Greece and Turkey have made concerted efforts in recent years to improve relations. When devastating earthquakes struck both countries a few weeks apart in 1999, Greece and Turkey sent aid and rescue teams to assist each other. There was an outpouring of public gratitude on both sides that marked a symbolic turning point in the relationship. Despite the Cyprus dispute, Greece supports Turkey's bid to join the EU.



***“I don’t think that all of a sudden everything has been solved. But a climate exists that could allow for a breakthrough on these issues.”***

—Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou, September 1999

### ***What are Turkey’s relations with the United States?***

The United States also supports Turkey’s admission to the European Union, but that is only one aspect of their relationship. The United States and Turkey have been allies for more than seventy years.

The basis for the U.S. relationship with Turkey has changed over time. During the years of the Cold War, the fact that Turkey bordered the Soviet Union and that Turkey’s government was staunchly anticommunist made it a very important ally in NATO. Since 1948, the United States has given Turkey \$13.8 billion in military aid and, to this day, Turkey has allowed the United States to house military bases on its soil.

The administration of U.S. President Barack Obama (2009- ) sees Turkey as an important and influential country in the region.

The United States collaborates with Turkey with the hope of solving regional problems, including the Syrian Civil War and Iran’s nuclear program.

Tension and disagreements are also part of the relationship. For example, Turkey supported the U.S.-led 1991 Gulf War against Iraq, but strongly opposed the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. The Turkish government did not see Saddam Hussein’s government as a threat and refused to allow the U.S. military to launch any attacks against Iraq from Turkish soil—a decision which marked a low point in relations between the two countries.

U.S.-Turkish relations have also been strained by tension between Turkey and Israel, a major U.S. ally. The 2010 Israeli military attack on a Turkish civilian ship carrying humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip severely harmed Turkey’s relationship with Israel. In addition, Turkey has been critical of Israel’s continued occupation of the Palestinian territories since 1967.

In spite of these differences, the United States and Turkey continue to value a cooperative relationship.

**“United by a common belief in peoples’ right to a decent life, Ankara and Washington share the very same objectives when it comes to engaging with the Middle East. We have both sided with the new collective consciousness in the region—one that prioritizes good governance in its struggle against authoritarianism.”**

—Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, November 15, 2013

### **What was the “zero problems with neighbors” policy?**

Prime Minister Erdoğan introduced a “zero problems with neighbors” policy early in his administration. It was designed to strengthen trade with neighboring countries, create cooperation on regional issues, and increase Turkey’s role as a leader in the Middle East.

A key component of the policy was to develop a better relationship with Syria after decades of hostility. In 1998, Turkey and Syria nearly fought a war over Syria’s support of the PKK. Beginning in 2004, relations began to improve with a visit from Syria’s leader, Bashar al-Assad—the first visit from a Syrian leader to Turkey in fifty-seven years.

But the improved relationship soured quickly with the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. As of May 2014, nine million Syrian civilians have fled their homes, 2.7 million of whom have fled the country. More than 900,000 Syrian refugees live in Turkey. This number is estimated to reach 1.5 million by the end of 2014.

Turkey sharply criticized the Syrian government for its escalation of violence against its own citizens and supported some Syrian rebel fighters. Turkey’s stance on Syria has led to worries that the Assad government might harbor PKK fighters and increase the risk of attacks against Turkey. As an important ally of Syria, Iran has been angered by Turkey’s support of Syrian rebel forces. Nevertheless, Iran and Turkey are continuing efforts to improve relations and increase trade with each other.

Just north of Iran, relations with Armenia are also improving. In 2009, both countries proposed establishing diplomatic relations after nearly a century of hostility. Progress has faltered due to disputes over territory and the border between the two countries remains closed. In 2014, Prime Minister Erdoğan opened a new chapter for the two countries by acknowledging the widespread suffering of Armenians during World War I. Although he did not call the events of 1915 genocide, it marked an important acknowledgement of the past.

**“The incidents of the First World War are our shared pain. It is our hope and belief that the peoples of an ancient and unique geography, who share similar customs and manners will be able to talk to each other about the past with maturity and to**

***remember together their losses in a decent manner. ... And it is with this hope and belief that we wish that the Armenians who lost their lives in the context of the early twentieth century rest in peace, and we convey our condolences to their grandchildren."***

—Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, April 23, 2014

### ***How did the Arab Revolutions affect Turkey?***

In December 2010, protests began against the autocratic government in the North African country of Tunisia. Hundreds of thousands of Tunisians took to the streets calling for an end to authoritarian rule and corruption. They wanted more democracy and economic opportunity. The protests spread to more than a dozen countries in the region. In some, like Egypt and Libya, protests led to a change in government. In other countries, protests were met with fierce repression by the government. In Syria, demonstrations led to a civil war. The protests marked the beginning of an ongoing transition in the Middle East.

Erdoğan has often stated that Turkey is an example of successful democracy in the Middle East. When the protests began, Turkey took a strong stand in favor of the protestors and democratic movements.

But in late May 2013, protests erupted in Turkey against the AKP-led government. The demonstrations began over a construction project in Taksim Square in Istanbul. A violent crackdown on the protestors by police shocked many people in Turkey and inspired further protests. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets to speak out against the government, which they saw as becoming more and more authoritarian. The demonstrations were primarily aimed at government policies and corruption, not at overthrowing the existing political system.

### ***Calls for Change***

Over the last decade, Turkey has undergone an enormous transformation. Economic growth has been rapid, as have new political developments. Concerns about the gov-

ernment's priorities and frustration with government corruption have also grown. Groups including social activists, journalists, and ordinary citizens are asking challenging questions about what life in Turkey should be like. These questions have led to political debate, tension, and even protests. In the following sections, you will read about a few of the topics at the center of public discussion.

### **Economic Growth and Development**

Turkey is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and its citizens are seeing their communities change. Economic growth has created new job opportunities and increased access to social services. Turkey's expanding middle class has embraced globalization and new technologies. Enrollment in universities has also increased. In 2014, 50 percent of college-aged women and 60 percent of college-aged men attended university. At the same time, high unemployment, poverty, and low high school graduation rates remain challenges.

Many people in Turkey argue that there are costs to the government's priorities when it comes to economic growth. In recent years, entire neighborhoods have been displaced to make room for new developments. On the outskirts of cities, *gecekondu*s have been demolished in order to build offices, apartment buildings, and shopping malls. Human rights groups claim that little support has been given to families who are forced to relocate.

***"The Turkish authorities should halt a series of heavy-handed forced evictions which have already resulted in a number of vulnerable families in central Istanbul effectively being made homeless."***

—Amnesty International, July 18, 2011

The 2013 protests exposed other concerns about the future of development in Turkey. Demonstrators rejected Prime Minister Erdoğan's eagerness to remove a park to make room for a mall. They also objected to

Erdoğan's personal connections to the construction contractors. Protestors demanded an end to the corruption and favors given to businesses with ties to the government.

## ■ Religion and Secularism

Religion plays a major role in the daily lives of many of Turkey's citizens. The majority of people in Turkey are Sunni Muslim. Over eighty thousand mosques are spread throughout the country and the call to prayer can be heard in most towns and cities. Alevism (a form of Islam), Christianity, and Judaism, among other religions, are also practiced in Turkey.

The Diyanet, which was formed under Atatürk, oversees religion in Turkey. It hires and trains religious leaders, issues building permits, and reviews the curriculum on religion taught in public schools.

Debates in Turkey today focus on the role of religion in society. There is a strong divide

between people who want religion to have more influence on law and everyday life, and those who want Turkey to remain true to its founding principles of secularism. Similarly, there is tension among parts of the government on how secularism should be implemented as Turkey moves into its second century. (It is worth noting that some people who are devout believers are also strong secularists.)

In recent years, the AKP has passed laws that limit alcohol sales, lower the age for enrolling in private religious schools, and allow greater freedom for women and girls to veil (see box, "The Headscarf Debate"). Strict secularists claim that these are pro-religious laws that hurt Atatürk's legacy, but the AKP and its supporters assert that the laws merely reflect their conservative values. In the case of the veil, the AKP argues that allowing women to cover their heads is about expanding the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion to women in schools and working in government.



In 2007, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in Ankara at the site of Atatürk's mausoleum in support of maintaining a strictly secular state. They also protested against the policies of Prime Minister Erdoğan and the AKP.

Photograph by Selahattin Sonmez (CC BY-SA 2.5).

Photograph by Susannah Bechtel.



People gather in the courtyard of the Eyüp Sultan Mosque at sunrise for prayer. Istanbul, March 2013.

## ■ Ethnic and Religious Minorities

For decades, human rights groups have demanded increased protections and rights for minorities in Turkey. Many minority groups argue that the government continues to ignore their role in Turkish history and society. For example, Kurds and Armenians call for the right to publish and teach in their native languages, and some religious minorities call for equal treatment from the Diyanet when it comes to building houses of worship. They claim that the Diyanet favors Sunni Muslim communities.

Beyond the government's treatment, ethnic and religious minorities have also been the victims of hate crimes and discrimination.

***“The era of the Lausanne Treaty [of 1923] was a time when minorities were not accorded many rights.... We cannot base ourselves on a human rights philosophy that still remains within that framework. We are now in the 21st century. We are in an entirely different world.”***

—Nimet Baş, Education Minister

Under pressure from individual groups and the European Union, the Turkish government has taken steps in recent years to resolve long-standing disputes with minority communities. For example, in 2011, the government announced that it would return property to Christian and Jewish communities that was illegally confiscated following World War I. In the fall of 2013, Erdoğan announced a democracy package that also addressed minority rights. His reforms included removing restrictions on the use of the Kurdish alphabet and allowing Kurdish to be taught in private, but not public, schools.

## ■ Women's Rights

Human rights groups in Turkey are also concerned about gender inequality and discrimination in government, education, and the economy. As of 2014, women held 14 percent of seats in the Grand National Assembly and less than 4 percent of local public offices. Around 10 percent fewer girls attend secondary school than boys, and in the workforce, women hold one-quarter of paid jobs. Although gains have been made in recent years,

## The Headscarf Debate

In 1999, Merve Kavakçı, a recently elected politician, arrived at parliament to be sworn into office. Because she attempted to wear a headscarf at the ceremony, she caused an uproar. The prime minister scolded her for “challenging the state,” and fellow members of parliament chanted for her to “get out.” Kavakçı was prevented from taking her oath of office that day.

Fourteen years later, on October 31, 2013, four Turkish members of parliament—Sevde Bayazıt Kaçar, Gülay Samancı, Nurcan Dalbudak, and Gönül Bekin Şahkulubey—walked into parliament as they had countless times before, except this was the first day they wore headscarves. Although some fellow politicians disagreed with their decision, the women took their seats without commotion.

The experiences of the women in these two stories highlight a polarizing and controversial topic in Turkey. For decades, strict secular laws banned people from wearing religious clothing in government offices, educational institutions, and the courts. Supporters of these laws believe that religion should not play a role in politics or government. Other Turkish citizens argue that the clothing restrictions discriminate against religious citizens. They claim that the ban on headscarves not only limited women’s rights to religious and political expression, but also violated their rights to employment and education, since women wearing headscarves were not hired for government jobs or allowed to attend public universities. In order to gain access to these opportunities, women had to make a decision about removing their headscarf.

When the AKP came to power, it pledged to loosen the restrictions on the headscarf. In 2011, Turkey lifted the ban at universities, and in 2013, it lifted the ban for employees in government offices. As of 2014, the ban remains in effect for the military, police force, and judges.

women’s rights organizations continue to protest traditions and laws that contribute to gender inequality.

Since the 1980s, coalitions of human rights activists, feminist groups, and religious organizations have also drawn attention to Turkey’s high rates of violence against women. Approximately 40 percent of women in Turkey experience domestic violence from their partners, and less than 2 percent of cases are reported. Many women do not report abuse because of pressure from their community and because they are often turned away or harassed by local authorities.

Women’s rights groups, as well as the EU, have successfully pushed the government in Turkey to amend its laws regarding domestic violence. Still, many towns and cities do not have counseling services or shelters, and single and divorced women lack some protections granted to married women under the law.

## ■ Authoritarianism

Some people argue that Turkey’s government has a tradition of authoritarianism. They point to the CHP’s era of one-party rule, the string of military coups, and the more recent consolidation of political power under the AKP. The government’s response to the 2013 protests only solidified this reputation in the eyes of many Turkish citizens and the outside world. Images circulated of the violent crackdown by police. In the months following the initial protests, thousands of journalists and other civilians were arrested.

***“I request our citizens who supported the protests until today kindly to return to their homes. From now on the state will unfortunately have to consider everyone who remains there a supporter or member of a terror organization.”***

—Egemen Bağış, Turkey’s European Union minister, June 15, 2013

Flickr by Alan Hilditch, CC BY2.0.



Police forces in Istanbul use tear gas to disperse protestors near Taksim Square. June 1, 2013.

A series of laws limit freedoms of speech, protest, and other forms of expression in Turkey. The two most common offenses are “Crimes against Atatürk” and insulting “Turkishness.” Under these laws, which have existed for many decades, anyone who insults the legacy of Atatürk or the Turkish republic can be arrested and sentenced to jail. The government has used the vague definitions of these crimes to shut down print publications, radio stations, YouTube, and, most recently, Twitter in 2014. (The Constitutional Court later overruled the Twitter ban, saying it violated the right to freedom of expression.)

In February 2014, the government added new restrictions to Turkey’s Internet Law. The changes give the Turkish government the authority to shut down web pages prior to obtaining a court order. They also require internet service providers (ISPs) to collect data on users and provide this information to government officials if requested. The government claims that the amended law is vital to

Turkey’s national security, but many people in Turkey argue that it is yet another tool to intimidate and repress government opposition.

When opposition spills out onto the streets, the Turkish government is also known for issuing harsh penalties. During the height of the Kurdish conflict in the 1990s, the Anti-Terror Law was passed to crack down on the PKK. Since then, the law has been used to jail thousands of people who participate in peaceful demonstrations, from anti-censorship rallies in Ankara to Kurdish rights marches in southeastern Anatolia. Citizens arrested under the law can be sentenced to between seven and fifteen years in jail.

As part of his reform package in 2013, Prime Minister Erdoğan agreed to narrow the definition of crimes considered under the Anti-Terror Law. However, a report released by the Justice Ministry later that year revealed the high number of arrests still being made.

## Conclusion

The people of Turkey are in the midst of a time of change and new political developments. While the country values its history and the vision of its founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, there are new forces at play that challenge some of his ideas. As Turkey's economy grows, people in Turkey also grapple with issues of inequality and corruption. Poised between Europe and Asia, the Middle East and Russia, Turkey's residents must consider their country's role in the region and the world.

In the coming days, you will have an opportunity to consider a range of alternatives for Turkey's future. As you do, keep in mind what you have learned from the reading. You should strive to put yourself in the shoes of ordinary people in Turkey and consider how their history might shape their outlook on the future.

The three options that you will explore are written from the perspective of people in Turkey. Each is based on a distinct set of values and beliefs about Turkey's social and political priorities.



Tweet published on March 20, 2014.

## Options in Brief

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### Option 1: Preserve Atatürk's Vision

The history of the Turkish Republic is a great one. Today, our economy is growing, our people are becoming more prosperous, and Turkey is taking its rightful place among the world's most important powers. These achievements did not come easily. We have the only political system among the countries of the Muslim Middle East where there are routine competitive elections and the only political system in the entire region that does not include any religious law. We must remember the vision of Atatürk and the path he put us on. It was Atatürk who insisted upon our national unity, made strong by our allegiance to Turkey and a shared conviction that government should be free from religious influence. We must protect our great country from the many threats that face it. Those who challenge the republic from within must not cross certain lines; we will never tolerate those who criticize Atatürk or seek to undermine his ideas of national unity and secularism.

### Option 2: Progress with Strong Leadership

The time has come for Turkey to assert itself! Turkey is positioned to become a powerful leader in the region and the world. Turkey is a stable, secular democracy with free and fair elections. The last ten years have seen tremendous economic growth and political stability. Today, we are ready to put an end to several of our country's undemocratic legacies. Military meddling in politics is unacceptable; the Turkish republic no longer needs a "guardian." Turkey's secular government is safe, and no one is threatening to impose religious law in Turkey. But religious individuals should feel freer to express their views in government and in society. Just as many European democracies accept Christian political parties, Turkey should welcome parties that reflect the

religious values of its citizens. For decades, Turkey's mistreatment of minorities and its rigid stance on Kurdish issues have ostracized our country from the international community. We must be willing to find lasting political solutions so that we can put these problems to rest. Our vision can lead Turkey successfully into its second century.

### Option 3: Strengthen Democracy

We seek freedom, equality, peace, and justice! Before our eyes, we see that Turkey is becoming more and more authoritarian. A true democracy should not mistreat and discriminate against ethnic and religious minorities. A democracy should not restrict political speech, the internet, or the press. A democracy should not rely on the military's guardianship over politics, or use excessive police force against peaceful protesters. A democracy should not limit political opposition or tolerate corruption and bribery. We want to bring Turkey into the twenty-first century by expanding democratic practices, strengthening press freedoms, and ensuring rights for minority groups. Together, we strive for everyone to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed democratic rights and freedoms. Our policies provide a democratic and egalitarian alternative for Turkey, as well as for our region and the world. We—the people of Turkey—must rise up and voice our demands for justice together!

## Option 1: Preserve Atatürk's Vision

The history of the Turkish Republic is a great one. Today, our economy is growing, our people are becoming more prosperous, and Turkey is taking its rightful place among the world's most important powers. These achievements did not come easily. We have the only political system among the countries of the Muslim Middle East where there are routine competitive elections and the only political system in the entire region that does not include any religious law. We must remember the vision of Atatürk and the path he put us on. We are a great nation that emerged from the terrible losses of World War I and the War of Independence in spite of the efforts of countries that wanted to weaken and divide us.

Turkey is located in a region filled with conflict often driven by religious and ethnic divisions. It was Atatürk who insisted upon our national unity, made strong by our allegiance to Turkey and a shared conviction that government should be free from religious influence. Unfortunately, there are political ideas at work in our society that threaten these foundations of our country. Any government endorsement of more conservative, religiously-justified policies could undermine Turkey. Of course, we will continue to recognize religious holidays, but the government must continue to control Islamic religious institutions. We would never have advanced so far if we had allowed religion to dictate our laws. We must also be wary of claims by minority groups like the Kurds who threaten the unity of Turkey with their demands for rights and secret aspirations for separate territory. We must protect our great country from the many threats that face it. Those who challenge the republic from within must not cross certain lines; we will never tolerate those who criticize Atatürk or seek to undermine his ideas of national unity and secularism. And we must not be naïve about our relationship with countries in the region. We will never have “zero problems” with Iran or Syria. We have a powerful military and are a member of NATO, and we would do well to remember our long-term alliance with the United States.

### Option 1 is based on the following beliefs

- Turkish unity provides the foundation for our security and prosperity. Minority groups' calls for more rights are a real threat to unity.

- We must remain a strictly secular state, or we will risk undermining the system that has allowed us to grow and prosper.

- Atatürk never believed that the military should rule, but it must remain the guardian of the republic and be

willing to intervene temporarily to ensure that his vision is preserved.

- Our relationship with the United States, its allies (including Israel), and NATO remains the cornerstone of our international security.

- Our economic relationship with Europe is important, but we should be careful not to compromise our beliefs just to join the EU.

## What policies should we pursue?

---

- We must continue to use the full force of the law to restrict any act or expression that undermines the Turkish Republic or slanders its founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

- Religious ideas are creeping more and more into politics. Our constitution says that Turkey is secular. We must maintain control over religious institutions.

- The military in our country has stepped in on occasion to protect the republic when it has been threatened by public unrest or by reckless politicians. These interventions have saved the republic. Any efforts to undermine the military through show trials or limit its influence must be stopped.

- Our foreign policy must recognize that we live in a volatile region near

countries whose interests are very different from our own. Our location near Russia and the Middle East means that we play an extremely important role in world affairs. We can best preserve our security by maintaining our military alliance with the United States and NATO.

- Growing our economy remains a top priority. At the crossroads between Europe and Asia, and bordering the Middle East and Russia, Turkey should reduce any existing barriers to trade and increase exports as much as possible. EU membership remains desirable, as long European countries do not try to force us to make changes to our legal system and tell us what rights we must grant our citizens.

## Arguments for

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1. Atatürk understood the steps Turkey needed to take to become a powerful, prosperous country. His vision has proven itself and holds true today. Turkey is a model of prosperity for the region and its neighbors.

2. Turkey is the only example of a successful representative government in the Muslim Middle East. Countries in the region that have failed to establish purely secular legal systems have also failed to develop genuinely representative governments. Consider the examples of Egypt, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

3. Our relationship with NATO and the United States gives us access to the finest military equipment and training for our officers.

4. Turkey has a long history of groups that have tried to undermine or divide it. For example, we experienced a terrible civil war against PKK terrorists. Our strict laws and the role of the military as guardians of the republic have kept Turkey safe against these threats.

## Arguments against

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1. Minority groups like the Kurds and others deserve the right to their own cultural heritage. Giving them these rights will actually increase their loyalty to Turkey. Our efforts to suppress them have led to unnecessary violence and bloodshed. Atatürk's vision of a nation of Turks without distinction of different ethnicities and religions is outdated and unnecessary.

2. One of the most basic human rights is the freedom of religion. Government control of religious institutions is not secularism, it is authoritarianism.

3. The military's role in four coups against elected governments has undermined Turkish democracy, led to corruption, and held back our development and growth. The military has not acted as a guardian of the republic; it has acted as a guardian of its own power and authority.

4. We must recognize that our foreign policy must not be driven solely by our desire for stability, security, and economic growth. Human rights must also be given priority. For example, why should we not criticize Israel over its treatment of Palestinians?

## Option 2: Progress with Strong Leadership

The time has come for Turkey to assert itself! With our booming economy, geostrategic location, and ties to the Middle East, Central Asia, and Europe, Turkey is positioned to become a powerful leader in the region and the world. Following in the footsteps of Europe helped Turkey become a thriving democracy, and we look forward to the day our country will join the European Union. But it is also time for Turkey to step out from the shadow of Europe and craft our own foreign policy. For too long, we have overlooked our neighbors. We have recently embarked on a new path by expanding cooperation and economic ties with countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Turkey is a beacon of democracy and freedom in an undemocratic and volatile part of the world. We should use our growing political, economic, and military influence to help bring peace, democracy, and security to our neighborhood.

Turkey is a stable, secular democracy with free and fair elections. The last ten years have seen tremendous economic growth and political stability. Today, we are ready to put an end to several of our country's undemocratic legacies. Military meddling in politics is unacceptable; the Turkish republic no longer needs a "guardian." Turkey's secular government is safe, and no one is threatening to impose religious law in Turkey. But religious individuals should feel freer to express their views in government and in society. Just as many European democracies accept Christian political parties, Turkey should welcome parties that reflect the religious values of its citizens. For decades, Turkey's mistreatment of minorities and its rigid stance on Kurdish issues have ostracized our country from the international community. These long-standing issues have drawn international criticism and been a roadblock to joining the EU. We must be willing to find lasting political solutions so that we can put these problems to rest. Our vision can lead Turkey successfully into its second century.

### Option 2 is based on the following beliefs

- In a democracy, the military should not be involved in politics. Military coups and plots against popularly elected governments are inexcusable and harmful.

- People in Turkey should be free to express their religious views without government interference. Political parties that are inspired by religious values do not threaten secularism, and pious citizens deserve access to political parties that represent their beliefs.

- Turkey's democracy is a positive source of inspiration for other countries in the region.

- Turkey's treatment of Kurds and other minorities has drawn unwanted international attention.

- For decades, our membership in NATO and our alliances with the United States and Europe have been fundamental to our security and political development. Turkey has undertaken extensive democratic and economic reforms and deserves membership in the European Union.

## What policies should we pursue?

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- Turkey's elected leaders should continue to bring the military under civilian control, and limit the military's influence in government policy making. The government should prosecute any military leaders who plot to overthrow the government.
- The Turkish government should allow religion to play a greater role in public life. For example, it should allow more opportunities for religious education, and continue to ensure that citizens are free to dress in accordance with their religious beliefs, even in public institutions, such as parliament and public universities. We must also guarantee that political parties inspired by religious beliefs be allowed to participate in government.
- Turkey should assert itself as a regional leader, helping to promote stability and

encourage the democratic transformation of its neighbors. For example, we should take steps against Israel's treatment of Palestinians and the murderous regime in Syria.

- We are under pressure to expand human rights and civil liberties for Kurds and other minorities in Turkey. We should continue negotiations with Kurdish political leaders to seek a lasting solution to the Kurdish conflict.
- We should maintain our important relationships with the United States and Europe, and continue to carry out democratic reforms in order to join the European Union. We should use our growing economic power to play a larger role in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa.

## Arguments for

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1. Turkey has been ruled by secular law for almost one hundred years. We can be confident enough in our political system to allow for the expansion of political parties that encompass more diverse views, including those that are religious.
2. The Turkish military's claim to be a guardian of the republic is just an excuse to exert its power and interfere in politics. Military meddling in politics does more harm than good.
3. Turkey is a spectacular example of a thriving democracy, and is an inspiration for people throughout the Middle East. We should support those who seek positive political change in their own countries.
4. Turkey's stubborn and hostile stance toward Kurds has only brought conflict and strife to our nation. We must be more open to negotiating new political solutions so that we can put this problem behind us.

## Arguments against

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1. Religious political parties threaten the foundations of Turkey and harm our international reputation. Political leaders should not be allowed to use government as a tool to force religious values on society.
2. Kurds in the region want to establish their own country and will take territory from Turkey to do so. Negotiating with PKK leaders or granting Kurds greater rights would put Turkey on a slippery slope and encourage Kurdish separatism.
3. Seeking new alliances and a more assertive role in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa is a risky move. We should stick to our traditional allies—NATO, the United States, and European countries—and keep our foreign policy in line with theirs.
4. Turkey's government is authoritarian and a far cry from the model democracy it claims to be. Journalists are jailed for criticizing the government, and protesters meet a violent response from security forces. We must rid Turkey of laws that limit free speech and access to the internet, and guarantee full civil and political rights for all Turkish citizens.

## Option 3: Strengthen Democracy

**W**e seek freedom, equality, peace, and justice! Before our eyes, we see that Turkey is becoming more and more authoritarian. Any claim that our country is a thriving democracy is blind to harsh realities. A true democracy should not mistreat and discriminate against ethnic and religious minorities. A democracy should not restrict political speech or the press. A democracy should not rely on the military's guardianship over politics, or use excessive police force against peaceful protesters. A democracy should not limit political opposition or tolerate corruption and bribery. We want to bring Turkey into the twenty-first century by expanding democratic practices, strengthening press freedoms, and ensuring rights for minority groups. Writers, intellectuals, laborers, farmers, retirees, unemployed youth, as well as representatives of various ethnic and religious groups are now among our ranks.

Together, we strive for everyone to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed democratic rights and freedoms without regard to language, political view, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. This means granting citizens the opportunity to receive an education and public services in their native language; finding a peaceful and long-lasting solution to the Kurdish conflict; and implementing reforms that liberate civil society from the tight grip of the government. Our policies provide a democratic and egalitarian alternative for Turkey, as well as for our region and the world. We should support the Arab uprisings and their attempts to jump-start democracy. While we remain wary of the imperialist tendencies of superpowers, we cannot pass up opportunities to work within the international community (e.g. the UN and NATO) to bring about our goals. We plan to minimize tensions with our neighbors by negotiating solutions to conflicts. We should support the rights of Kurds throughout the region and the establishment of an independent Palestine. We see EU membership as a way of promoting Turkey's democratization. But ultimately, Turkey's future rests in our hands. We—the people of Turkey—must rise up and voice our demands for justice together!

### Option 3 is based on the following beliefs

- Turkey's tradition of authoritarianism needs to end. Immediate steps should be taken to strengthen democracy; otherwise, we will face continued injustice and hardship.

- All religious groups should be treated equally, with the protected right to congregate, educate their members, and worship. The Diyanet should support training for leaders of all religions.

- The military should not intervene in domestic politics. Instead, it

should remain under the firm control of the elected government.

- Turkey has the unique opportunity to become a champion of democracy and human rights in our region and the broader international community.

- EU membership is a vehicle for change within our country, but it is not an end-all solution.

## What policies should we pursue?

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- While strengthening our economy and regional standing are important, we must add human rights to our list of priorities. The protection of democracy and human rights needs to become an important goal.

- Turkey must take immediate steps to protect the rights of political opposition, public protest, internet freedom, and critical media coverage.

- Turkey's constitution should defend the rights of all minorities—Kurds, Alevis,

and others—and steps should be taken to redress past government-led oppression.

- Turkey should criticize countries that violate human rights and those that have imperialist objectives. Failing to do so undermines our commitment to democracy and human rights within our own borders.

- We must curb the influence of the military over politics.

## Arguments for

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1. The general public, once united over the goal of obtaining freedom, equality, peace, and justice, has the potential to rid Turkey of authoritarianism. Collective action can bring about collective gains.

2. Turkey's expanding role in the region and the world provides us with a unique opportunity to become an advocate for democracy and human rights.

3. Turkey has a long history of denying ethnic and religious minorities appropriate recognition and rights under the guise of “protecting” the Turkish state. But this stance has ultimately hurt both our people and our international reputation.

4. The importance of Atatürk's legacy should not hold us back from granting equal rights to our citizens. Turkey is nearing the one-hundredth anniversary of its founding—have we not waited long enough for true democracy?

## Arguments against

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1. Turkey is not a struggling democracy. We have free and fair elections—an international marker of democracy. Calls for increased democracy and human rights are not only grounded in absurd lies, but also distract us from more urgent matters, such as economic growth and political stability.

2. Turkey has a long history of groups attempting to divide its territory and create instability. We cannot allow ethnic, religious, or political divisions to fragment the country.

3. The military is the guardian of the republic. Limiting the military's ability to step in during times of political instability is risky. We need to keep the traditions that have protected us.

4. Extensive government oversight and strict secularism remain important to our domestic security. Facing internal threats, we cannot afford to engage in petty discussions about government reforms.

## Supplementary Resources

### Books

Findley, Carter V. *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity—A History, 1789-2007* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010). 527 pages.

Hanioğlu, M. Şükrü. *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011). 296 pages.

Kinzer, Stephen. *Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008). 265 pages.

White, Jenny. *Muslim Nationalism and the New Turks* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013). 264 pages.

Zürcher, Erik J. *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004). 424 pages.

### Online Resources

Al-Monitor: Turkey Pulse <<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/turkey-pulse>> International news source with contributing journalists from the Middle East.

Borderlands <<http://graphics.wsj.com/BORDERLANDS/#p=null>> An interactive resource produced by the *Wall Street Journal* with videos and articles that follow the lives of people living along the border between Turkey and Syria.

Hürriyet Daily News <<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com>> A leading newspaper in Turkey.

Jadaliyya <<http://turkey.jadaliyya.com>> An online magazine produced by the Arab Studies Institute. Resources include timelines, in-depth articles, and “Media Roundups” that aggregate news articles from multiple sources in Turkey and other countries.

Today’s Zaman <<http://www.todayszaman.com/home>> A leading newspaper in Turkey.

Whose Turkey is it? <[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/09/magazine/whose-turkey-is-it.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/09/magazine/whose-turkey-is-it.html?_r=0)> An in-depth article on the lead up to the Gezi protests and their aftermath from *The New York Times Magazine*.

## Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey

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*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* traces the final years of the Ottoman Empire and the history of the Turkish Republic. Students explore the legacies of Atatürk's sweeping reforms and then grapple with the same questions and challenges facing people in Turkey today.

*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* is part of a continuing series on current and historical international issues published by the Choices Program at Brown University. Choices materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens.

## THE CHOICES PROGRAM

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# Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey



## THE CHOICES PROGRAM

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June 2014

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The Choices Program is a program of the Watson Institute for International Studies and the School of Professional Studies at Brown University.

The Choices Program develops curricula on current and historical international issues and offers workshops, institutes, and in-service programs for high school teachers. Course materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens.

## Acknowledgments

*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* was developed by the Choices Program with the assistance of the research staff at the Watson Institute for International Studies, scholars at Brown University, and several other experts in the field. We wish to thank the following researchers for their invaluable input:

Boğaç Ergene

Aga Khan Visiting Professor in Islamic Humanities, Brown University

Stephen Kinzer

Visiting Fellow in International Studies

Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University

Barbara Petzen

Middle East Connections

Martin W. Sampson III

Associate Professor of Political Science Emeritus, University of Minnesota

Nukhet Sandal

Director, War and Peace Studies, Ohio University

Maps by Alexander Sayer Gard-Murray.

Cover photograph by Susannah Bechtel.

*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* is part of a continuing series on international public policy issues. New units are published each academic year and all units are updated regularly.

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THE CHOICES PROGRAM is a program of the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. CHOICES was established to help citizens think constructively about foreign policy issues, to improve participatory citizenship skills, and to encourage public judgement on policy issues.



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ISBN 1-60123-164-4 / 978-1-60123-164-2-TRB.

## The Choices Approach to Current Issues

Choices curricula are designed to make complex international issues understandable and meaningful for students. Using a student-centered approach, Choices units develop critical thinking and an understanding of the significance of history in our lives today—essential ingredients of responsible citizenship.

Teachers say the collaboration and interaction in Choices units are highly motivating for students. Studies consistently demonstrate that students of all abilities learn best when they are actively engaged with the material. Cooperative learning invites students to take pride in their own contributions and in the group product, enhancing students' confidence as learners. Research demonstrates that students using the Choices approach learn the factual information presented as well as or better than those using a lecture-discussion format. Choices units offer students with diverse abilities and learning styles the opportunity to contribute, collaborate, and achieve.

Choices units on current issues include student readings, a framework of policy options, suggested lesson plans, and resources for structuring cooperative learning, role plays, and simulations. Students are challenged to:

- recognize relationships between history and current issues
- analyze and evaluate multiple perspectives on an issue
- understand the internal logic of a viewpoint
- identify and weigh the conflicting values represented by different points of view
- engage in informed discussion
- develop and articulate original viewpoints on an issue
- communicate in written and oral presentations
- collaborate with peers

Choices curricula offer teachers a flexible resource for covering course material while actively engaging students and developing skills in critical thinking, deliberative discourse, persuasive writing, and informed civic participation. The instructional activities that are central to Choices units can be valuable components in any teacher's repertoire of effective teaching strategies.

## The Organization of a Choices Unit

**Introducing the Background:** Each Choices curriculum resource provides historical and student-centered lesson plans that explore critical issues. This historical foundation prepares students to analyze a range of perspectives and then to deliberate about possible approaches to contentious policy issues.

**Exploring Policy Alternatives:** Each Choices unit has a framework of three or four divergent policy options that challenges students to consider multiple perspectives. Students understand and analyze the options through a role play and the dialogue that follows.

• **Role Play:** The setting of the role play varies, and may be a Congressional hearing, a meeting of the National Security Council, or an election campaign forum. In groups, students explore their assigned options and plan short presentations. Each group, in turn, is challenged with questions from classmates.

• **Deliberation:** After the options have been presented and students clearly understand the differences among them, students enter into deliberative dialogue in which they analyze together the merits and trade-offs of the alternatives presented; explore shared concerns as well as conflicting values, interests, and priorities; and begin to articulate their own views.

For further information see <[www.choices.edu/deliberation](http://www.choices.edu/deliberation)>.

**Exercising Citizenship:** Armed with fresh insights from the role play and the deliberation, students articulate original, coherent policy options that reflect their own values and goals. Students' views can be expressed in letters to Congress or the White House, editorials for the school or community newspaper, persuasive speeches, or visual presentations.

## Note to Teachers

Turkey is located at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Its history is rich. Its largest city, Istanbul, once known as Constantinople and Byzantium, was previously the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, Latin, and Ottoman Empires. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's revolutionary reforms and efforts to create a modern, unified, and secular country out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire make up one of the most remarkable stories of the twentieth century. While the legacy of Atatürk still looms large, there are new forces at play today that shape Turkey and its relationship to the world.

*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* traces the final years of the Ottoman Empire, the struggle for independence, and the birth of the Turkish Republic. The readings explore Atatürk's sweeping reforms, the emergence of a multiparty democracy, a series of military coups, and the Kurdish conflict. The readings conclude by examining current issues in Turkey, from recent political changes within the country to Turkey's foreign affairs. In a culminating simulation, students grapple with the same questions and challenges facing people in Turkey today.

•**Suggested Five-Day Lesson Plan:** The Teacher Resource Book accompanying *Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* contains a day-by-day lesson plan and student activities that help build critical-thinking skills.

•**Alternative Study Guides:** Each section of reading has two distinct study guides. The standard study guide helps students gather the information in the readings in preparation for analysis and synthesis in class. It also lists key terms that students will encounter in the reading. The advanced study guide requires that students analyze and synthesize material prior to class activities.

•**Vocabulary and Concepts:** The reading addresses subjects that are complex and challenging. To help your students get the most out of the text, you may want to review with them "Key Terms" found in the Teacher Resource Book (TRB) on page TRB-53 before they begin their assignment. An "Issues Toolbox" is also included on TRB-54. This provides additional information on key concepts.

•**Additional Online Resources:** More resources, including videos and lesson materials, are available for free at <<http://www.choices.edu/turkeymaterials>>.

The lesson plans offered here are provided as a guide. Many teachers choose to devote additional time to certain activities. We hope that these suggestions help you tailor the unit to fit the needs of your classroom.

## Integrating this Unit into Your Curriculum

Units produced by the Choices Program are designed to be integrated into a variety of social studies courses. Below are a few ideas about where *Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* might fit into your curriculum.

**World History:** Turkey's geographic location between Russia, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East has made it an important player in global politics throughout history. *Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* examines the end of the Ottoman Empire following World War One and the successful resistance movement that led to the establishment of an independent Turkey. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's dramatic steps to Westernize and secularize Turkey stood in stark contrast to surrounding regions where ideologies such as communism and fascism were taking hold. To carry out his reforms, Atatürk pursued an authoritarian style of governance that remains in tension with democracy in Turkey to this day.

**Global Studies/Current Issues:** Turkey occupies a unique role on the world stage. Turkey's geographic location puts it in proximity to the Middle East, Europe, and Russia. With its growing economy and population, Turkey is taking a more assertive role in regional politics. For example, Turkey has taken a firm position on the Syrian Civil War, Iran's nuclear program, and the Israeli-Palestinian issue. A member of NATO, Turkey aspires to increase its regional influence, but also to strengthen its international role by growing its economy, joining the European Union, and maintaining its historic alliance with the United States. Turkey's role in the region and the world promises to be shaped by its domestic politics regarding issues such as secularism, democracy, and human rights.

**International Relations:** Turkey has been an ally of the United States for more than seventy years. For large portions of this time, Turkey's foreign policy has been closely aligned with that of the United States and other NATO members. Turkey has long sought close relations with Europe as well, including membership in the European Union. At the end of the Cold War, Turkey's role in international relations began to shift. Turkey sought to refine its foreign policy to one that addresses its own security concerns and more closely reflects the values and interests of its citizens. For example, while Turkey has focused on joining the European Union for many years, it recently has increased its efforts to improve economic and political relations with its neighbors and to increase trade with the Middle East.

**Political Science/Government:** What is the legacy of Atatürk? Students explore the reforms imposed by Atatürk and consider their impact on Turkey. Did Atatürk catapult Turkey forward or did he establish a tradition of authoritarianism that has hindered Turkey's democratic development? Was the force he used to carry out his political agenda required and how should it be evaluated? How do Atatürk's ideas about national unity and secularism continue to influence Turkish politics today?

Additionally, students will examine the role leadership plays in national stewardship. Turkish and Ottoman leaders have had profound effects on the nation's history. Why are some leaders more successful than others? What is the relationship between political leaders and the citizenry?

## Reading Strategies and Suggestions

This curriculum covers a wide range of issues over a long period of time. Your students may find the readings complex. It might also be difficult for them to synthesize such a large amount of information. The following are suggestions to help your students better understand the readings.

**Pre-reading strategies:** Help students to prepare for the reading.

1. You might create a Know/Want to Know/Learned (K-W-L) worksheet for students to record what they already know about Turkey and what they want to know. As they read, they can fill out the “learned” section of the worksheet. Alternatively, brainstorm their current knowledge and then create visual maps in which students link the concepts and ideas they have about the topic.

2. Use the questions in the text to introduce students to the topic. Ask them to scan the reading for major headings, images, and questions so they can gain familiarity with the structure and organization of the text.

3. Preview the vocabulary and key concepts listed on each study guide and in the back of the TRB. The study guide asks students to identify key terms from the reading. Establish a system to help students find definitions for these key terms and others that they do not know.

4. Since studies show that most students are visual learners, use a visual introduction, such as photographs or a short film clip to orient your students.

5. Be sure that students understand the purpose for their reading the text. Will you have a debate later, and they need to know the information to formulate arguments? Will they create a class video?

### **Split up readings into smaller chunks:**

Assign students readings over a longer period of time or divide readings among groups of students.

**Graphic organizers:** You may also wish to use graphic organizers to help your students better understand the information that they are given. These organizers are located on TRB-8, TRB-21, and TRB-28. A graphic organizer for the options is provided on TRB-34. Students can complete them in class in groups or as part of their homework, or you can use them as reading checks or quizzes.

## The Geography of Turkey

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### Objectives:

**Students will:** Practice general map-reading skills.

Be able to locate and identify Turkey and its neighbors on a map.

Identify major geographical landmarks.

Compare the reach of the Ottoman Empire with Turkey's contemporary borders.

### Required Reading:

Before beginning the lesson, students should have read the Introduction and Part I of the student text and completed "Study Guide—Introduction and Part I" (TRB 5-6) or "Advanced Study Guide—Introduction and Part I" (TRB-7).

### Note:

This simple exercise is designed to acquaint students with the basic geography covered in the reading.

Colored pencils might be helpful for each group as students fill in their maps. Have students read all the directions carefully before beginning the exercise.

You may want students to refer to their maps as they continue reading. Some students may find it helpful to record the date of significant events on the map where they took place.

### Scholars Online Videos:

There are short, free videos designed to be used with this lesson at <http://www.choices.edu/resources/scholars-turkey-lessons.php>.

### Handouts:

"The Geography of Turkey" (TRB-9)

"Turkey" (TRB-10)

"Turkey and its Neighbors" (TRB-11)

"Physical and Political Map of Turkey" (TRB-12)

"Boundaries of the Ottoman Empire" (TRB-13)

(A PowerPoint presentation of these maps in color is available for download at <http://www.choices.edu/turkeymaterials>.)

### In the Classroom:

**1. Focus Question**—Write the question "How has Turkey's geography affected its history?" on the board. Ask students to recall information about Turkey and the Ottoman Empire from their reading.

Have students watch the Scholars Online Video of Stephen Kinzer answering the question, "How has Turkey's geography affected its history?"

**2. Group Work**—Divide the class into groups of three or four. Distribute the worksheet and maps to each group. Each group should read and follow the instructions.

**3. Sharing Conclusions**—After about twenty minutes, call on students to share their findings. Ask students to make connections to the reading when they can. What geographic features make Turkey unique? How does Turkey's geography affect its role in the world today?

### Homework:

Students should read Part II of the student text and complete "Study Guide—Part II" (TRB 18-19) or "Advanced Study Guide—Part II" (TRB-20).

## Study Guide—Introduction and Part I

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*Vocabulary:* Be sure that you understand these key terms from the Introduction and Part I of your reading. Circle ones that you do not know.

empire	separatist movements	resistance groups
ethnic group	secular	nationalists
sultan	authoritarian	self-determination
Islamic law	coup d'état	colonial possessions
caliph	Central Powers	mandate system
nationalism	Allied Powers	imperial control
autonomy	genocide	partition
military conscription	deportation	civil war
absolute monarchy	armistice	sovereignty
parliament		

1. a. What is the most popular religion in Turkey?  
  
b. What percentage of Turkey's population is Kurdish?
2. Turkey's European territory is called \_\_\_\_\_ and its Asian territory is called \_\_\_\_\_.
3. List four changes that took place during the Tanzimat.  
  
a.  
  
b.  
  
c.  
  
d.
4. Give two examples of nationalist groups that resisted the authority of the Ottoman Empire and took control of territory during the nineteenth century.  
  
a.  
  
b.
5. What freedoms did the Ottoman Empire grant religious minorities?

6. What did the Young Ottomans force the sultan to do in 1876? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7.
  - a. Why did some members of the Ottoman public support the Young Turk Revolution and the initial changes the CUP made?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Why did others oppose these changes?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Why did the CUP carry out a coup?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What event marked the beginning of the Armenian Genocide?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. During the War of Independence, the sultan's government was based in the city of \_\_\_\_\_, and the resistance movement was based in the city of \_\_\_\_\_.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. List three examples of challenges that Turkey faced in 1923.
  - a.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Advanced Study Guide—Introduction and Part I

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1. How did nationalist movements and European imperialism threaten the Ottoman Empire?
2. Why was there a rift between Istanbul and Ankara during the War of Independence? Who was based in each of these cities?
3. Describe the hardships and casualties that Ottoman citizens experienced during World War I and the War of Independence.
4. How did the population of Anatolia become less diverse over the course of World War I, the War of Independence, and the implementation of the Treaty of Lausanne?

## Part I: Timeline of the Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Empire ruled from \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_ and spanned the following regions of the world:

### Major Events

#### The Tanzimat

Years: \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_

What does the word "Tanzimat" mean?

#### The Young Ottomans

In the year \_\_\_\_\_, the Young Ottomans forced the sultan to adopt a \_\_\_\_\_.

#### The Young Turks

In the year \_\_\_\_\_, the Young Turks forced the sultan to adopt a \_\_\_\_\_.

In \_\_\_\_\_, the CUP led a coup and overthrew the government.

#### World War I

Years: \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_

Central Powers:

- 
- 
- 

Allied Powers:

- 
- 
- 
- 

#### The Armenian Genocide

Began in the year \_\_\_\_\_

#### War of Independence

Years: \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_

Who emerged as a leader of the resistance?

Who were resistance groups fighting?

### Territorial Changes

#### Nationalist Movements:

The empire lost territory to which nationalist movements in the 1800s?

In the years following the Young Turk Revolution, the CUP lost control over which territories?

#### Post-World War I Treaties:

##### Treaty of Sèvres, 1920:

Which European countries wanted to claim Ottoman territory?

##### Treaty of Lausanne, 1923:

The treaty expelled occupying forces and reclaimed territory for the new country of \_\_\_\_\_.

The treaty called for population exchanges between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## The Geography of Turkey

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*Instructions:* Follow the directions below as you fill in the map called “Turkey.” Refer to the maps on the following pages as directed and any other resources you may have in your classroom (the internet, maps on the wall, or other textbooks). Different colored pencils may also be helpful.

*Refer to the “Turkey and its Neighbors” map to complete tasks 1-3.*

1. List the countries that border Turkey. Label them on the map “Turkey.”

2. a. With which country does Turkey share the longest border?

b. Use the key to estimate the length of the border.

Length: \_\_\_\_\_

3. a. Shade and label the area of Turkey called Eastern Thrace on the map “Turkey.”

b. Use a different color or pattern to shade and label the area of Turkey called Anatolia.

*Refer to the “Physical and Political Map of Turkey” to complete tasks 4-6.*

4. Mark and label the following major cities on the map “Turkey”: Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Bursa, Diyarbakır, and Adana. Mark the country’s capital city with a star.

5. Label three major bodies of water that border Turkey.

6. Based on the maps and your readings, give two reasons why you think Istanbul is the largest city in Turkey with a growing population of fourteen million.

a.

b.

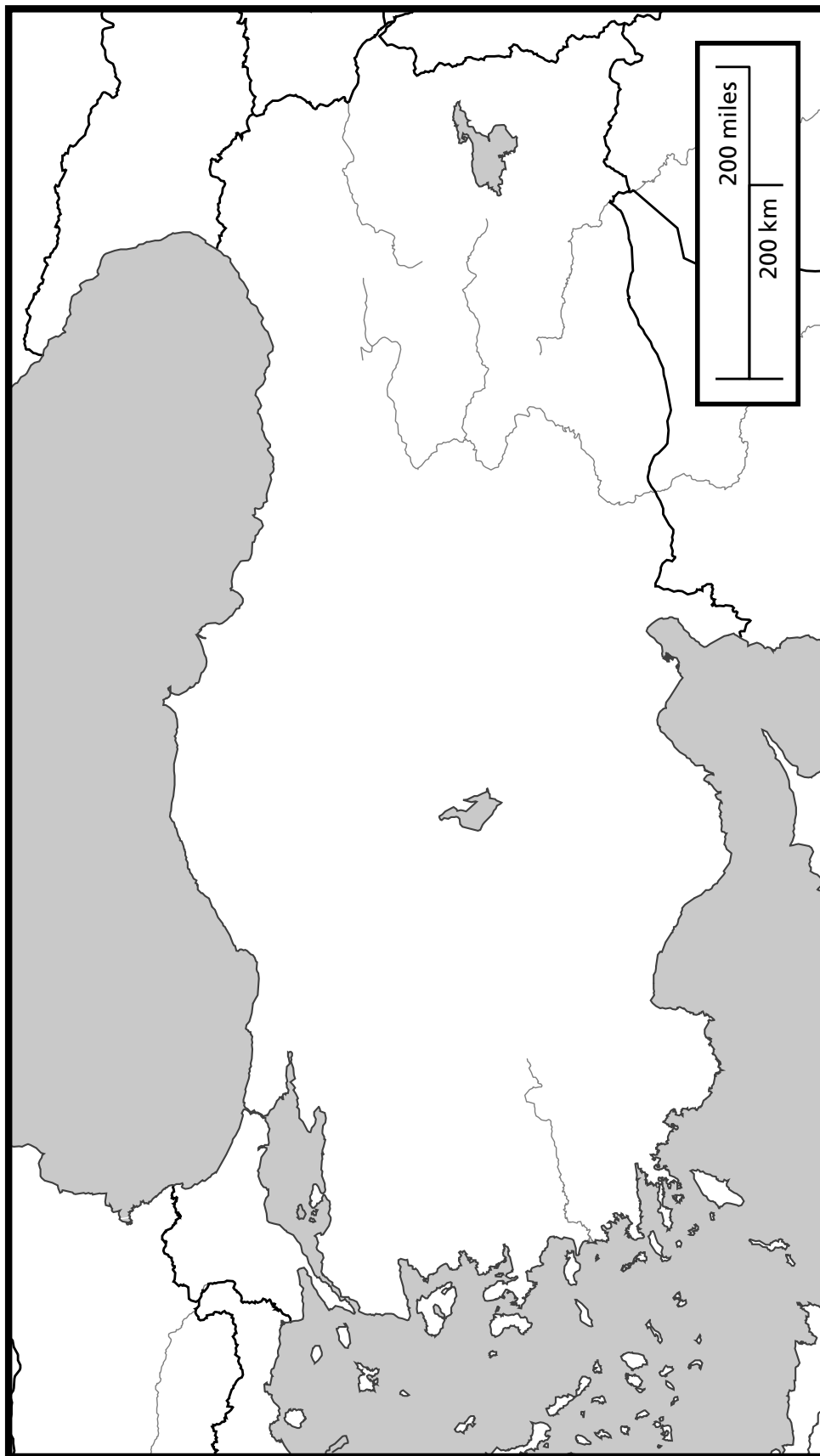
*Refer to the “Boundaries of the Ottoman Empire” map to complete tasks 7-8.*

7. On the map “Turkey and its Neighbors” roughly trace the boundary of the Ottoman Empire at its greatest extent.

8. a. List five contemporary Middle Eastern and North African countries whose lands were once part of the Ottoman Empire:

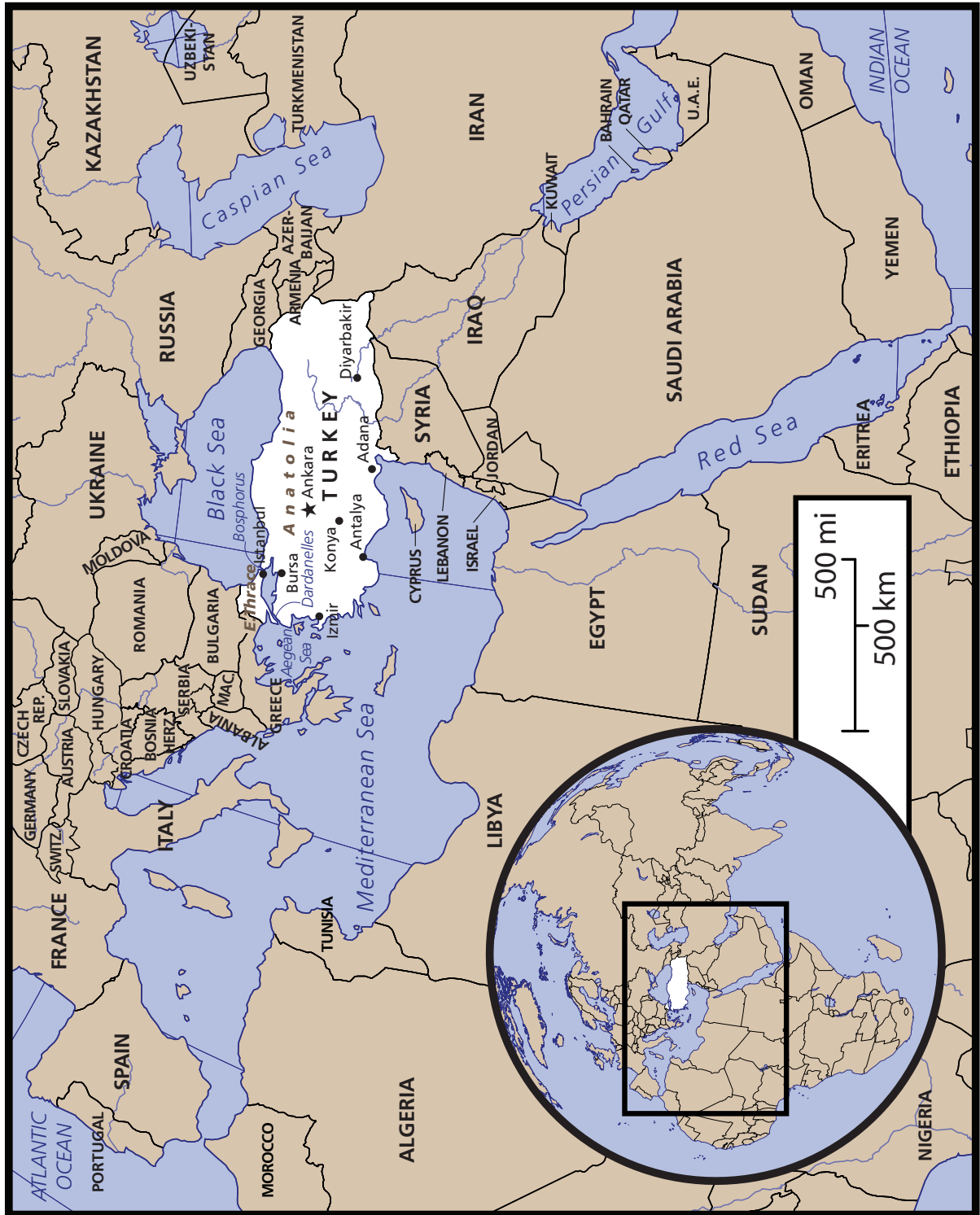
b. List five contemporary European countries whose lands were once part of the Ottoman Empire:

## Turkey



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

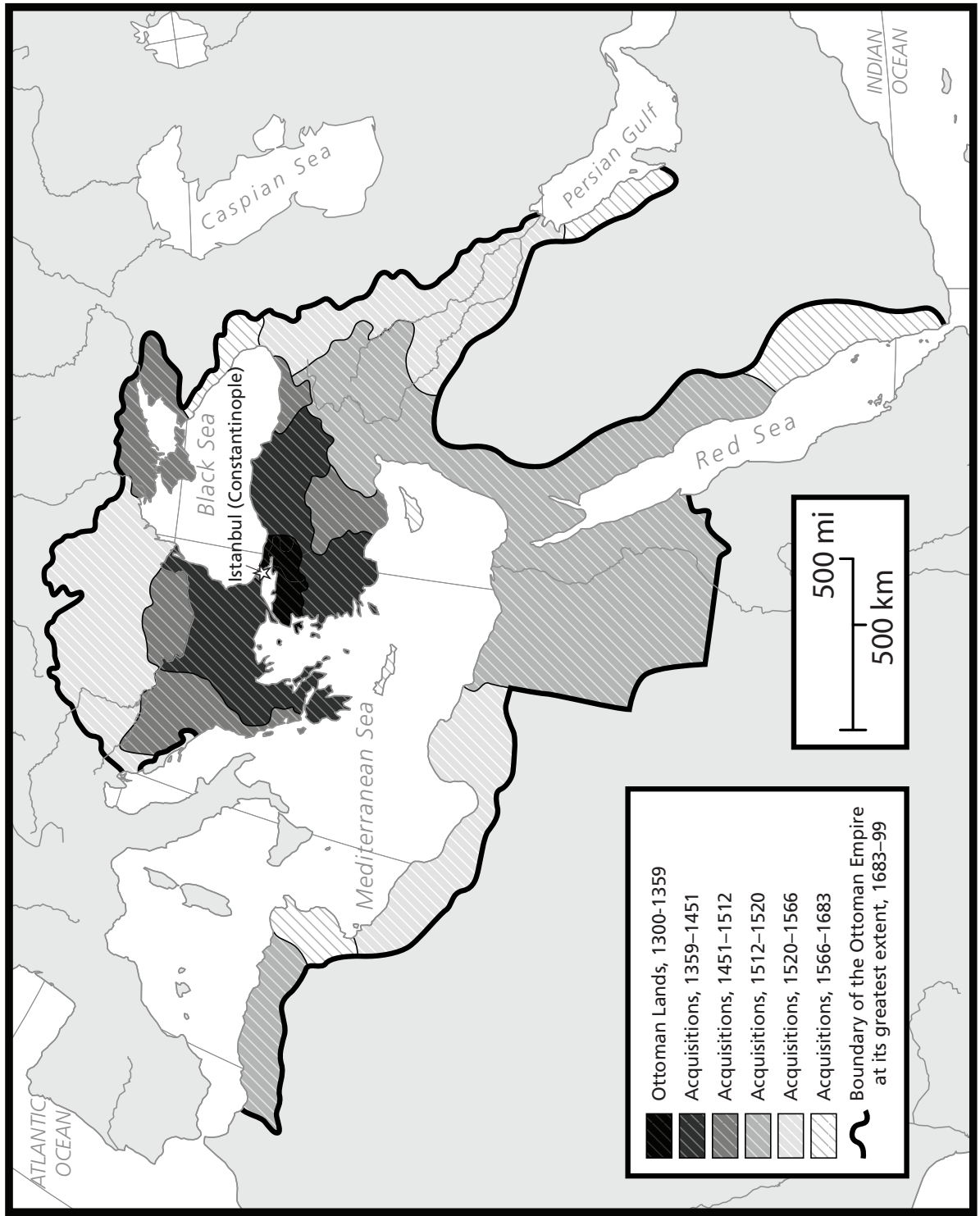
## Turkey and its Neighbors



## Physical and Political Map of Turkey



## Boundaries of the Ottoman Empire



## Looking at Turkey

### Objectives:

**Students will:** Analyze photographs of present-day Turkey.

Formulate ideas about Turkish life and society.

Consider the benefits and limitations of using photographs as a source for learning about Turkey.

### Required Reading:

Students should have read Part I of the reading and completed the “Study Guide—Introduction and Part I” (TRB 5-6) or the “Advanced Study Guide—Introduction and Part I” (TRB-7).

### Handouts:

“Looking at Turkey” (TRB-15)

### Resources:

This lesson requires that students have access to the internet or the ability to project a PowerPoint document of the photographs in the classroom. The PowerPoint document can be found at <http://www.choices.edu/turkey-materials>.

### In the Classroom:

**1. Reviewing the Reading—**Begin class by briefly reviewing with students what they know about Turkey. Prompt students to recount what they know about Turkey’s people, history, and economy. Ask students to each write one question about what they want to learn about Turkey.

**2. Exploring Turkey—**Divide the class into small groups and distribute the handout. Direct students to the PowerPoint or show the images to the class. Assign each group four photos and instruct students to examine each image closely and answer the questions on the handout. Alternatively, have students choose their own photos to analyze.

**Note:** Teachers should point out that it is important to be careful about drawing conclusions from photos, and remind students that they cannot be certain that a photo is an accurate or complete reflection of reality. While photos can provide clues about societies and how people live, students should be aware that photos, like written documents, show a small piece of a bigger picture.

### 3. Presentations and Class Discussion—

After small groups complete the questions, have everyone come together in a large group. Ask students to display their photos to the class and share their observations.

After students present their findings, have students reflect on what they learned from the photos. Did any of the photos change students’ ideas or assumptions about Turkey? Have the photographs raised any new questions about Turkey? Where do students think they might find answers to these questions? What are the benefits of using photographs as a resource for learning about other countries and societies?

What are the limitations of using photographs as a source for learning about Turkey? How might photos present a selective or misleading portrait of the subject matter? Do students think it is important to consider the point of view of the photographer when analyzing photos? Did the photographer have a purpose in taking these photographs?

### Homework:

Students should read Part II of the student text and complete “Study Guide—Part II” (TRB 18-19) or “Advanced Study Guide—Part II” (TRB-20).

## Looking at Turkey

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*Instructions:* Examine your photos and answer the following questions for each. Your group will be asked to share its impressions with the class. Keep in mind that photos cannot give you a complete picture of Turkish society, and you should be careful about drawing conclusions from the photographs.

1. Describe the photo (the setting, architecture and landscape, what is happening, etc.). If there are people in the photo, what are they doing? How would you describe their appearance (gender, age, expressions, body language, clothing, etc.)? How would you describe the types of interactions people are having?
2. How does this photo relate to what you know about Turkey?
3. Does this image offer any clues about life in Turkey? For example, does the photo reveal anything about religion, transportation, or geography? Can you learn anything new about Turkey from the image?
4. Does this image raise questions for you about Turkey?

## Art as Political Expression

### Objectives:

**Students will:** Analyze a painting's portrayal of Turkish history.

Understand the concept of a symbol.

Consider the power of an artistic image to influence an audience's understanding of historical events.

### Required Reading:

Students should have read Part II and completed the "Study Guide—Part II" (TRB 18-19) or "Advanced Study Guide—Part II" (TRB-20).

### Scholars Online Videos:

Short, free videos that can help students think about art and its connections to history and politics can be found at <<http://www.choices.edu/resources/scholars-turkey-lessons.php>>.

### Handouts:

"On the Road to Transformation" (TRB-22)

"Painting Analysis" (TRB-23)

### Note:

This lesson can be done as a whole class, in groups, or as individuals.

A PowerPoint of this painting in color is available to project in your classroom at <<http://www.choices.edu/turkeymaterials>>.

### In the Classroom:

**1. Focus Question**—Write the question "What is a symbol?" on the board. Establish a definition with the class. Can students think of examples of how symbols are used to represent or remember historical events?

**2. Getting Started**—Distribute "On the Road to Transformation" and "Painting Analysis" to students. Tell them that the Turkish artist Zeki Faik İzer created this painting in

1933. Ask students what was happening in Turkish history around this time. Who was Turkey's leader? Have students answer the questions about the painting on the worksheet.

**3. Analysis**—Review the painting and students' answers with the class. Can students identify any of the figures in the painting? What "transformation" do students think the title refers to?

Can students identify any symbols in the painting? How does each symbol relate to this period of Turkish history? If identifying a symbol is challenging, here are some symbols and questions that you might want to call students' attention to.

- The box that the central female figure is standing on, labeled 1923. (What is the significance of 1923 in Turkish history?)
- Atatürk. (What is he pointing at?)
- The soldiers to the right. (What role did soldiers play in Turkey's early years?)
- The clothing of the men and women surrounding Atatürk. (What new rules were in place about dress?)
- The boy holding a book that says "Turkish Language and History," while stepping on a scroll displaying the old Ottoman script. (What changes did Atatürk make regarding language and identity?)
- The figures cowering in the right foreground. (Who might they represent? Does their posture and appearance offer any clues?)

**4. Speculating about the Painting**—Challenge students to think about the whole painting.

What feeling did the artist want the painting to convey? For example, did he want his viewers to feel scared, proud, safe, angry, etc.?

What kind of view of Atatürk's reforms does this image represent? Do students believe the artist supported Atatürk's efforts to transform Turkey?

What power do images have to influence viewers' perceptions, feelings, and understandings of events? For example, how do students think people in Turkey in 1933 might have reacted to the painting? In Turkey today? Would some groups have a negative reaction?

Ask students for their own reactions to the painting. Can students think of other paintings that depict historical events?

### Extra Challenge:

This painting by Zeki Faik İzer was inspired by the French painter Eugène Delacroix's *Liberty Guiding the People—1830*. Delacroix's painting commemorates the French Revolution of 1830. Have students consider the similarities between the two paintings. (Be sure to preview the Delacroix painting to make sure it is appropriate for your classroom.) Ask students why they think Zeki Faik İzer chose to imitate the Delacroix painting. Do students think that Atatürk's reforms were revolutionary?

### Homework:

Students should read Part III and "Options in Brief" in the student text and complete "Study Guide—Part III" (TRB 25-26) or "Advanced Study Guide—Part III" (TRB-27).

## Study Guide—Part II

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*Vocabulary:* Be sure that you understand these key terms from Part II of your reading. Circle ones that you do not know.

social  
economic  
national identity  
civil code  
penal code  
commercial code  
Western countries  
development  
agrarian

international community  
Cold War  
martial law  
economic recession  
inflation  
unicameral  
Islamist  
insurgency

1. What is the meaning of the name Atatürk?

2. List three goals of Atatürk's reforms.

a.

b.

c.

3. List five of Atatürk's reforms.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

4. a. What was the Settlement Act of 1934?

b. How did it affect Turkey's Kurdish population?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

5. List three ways that the CHP maintained its tight grip on power in the 1920s and 1930s.

a.

b.

c.

6. a. What percentage of Turkey's population worked in agriculture in 1950?

b. Why did this percentage begin to change?

7. What lasting effect of the 1960 military coup do you think was most important? Explain.

8. Fill in the boxes below about the Kurdish conflict.

What have some government leaders thought about Kurdish nationalism?	Why have Kurdish activists protested the Turkish government's policies?

9. What were the original goals of the PKK?

10. Describe three ways that Kurdish civilians responded to the civil war.

a.

b.

c.

## Advanced Study Guide—Part II

---

1. What were the most important features of Atatürk's rule?
2. What important changes to Turkish society took place in the 1950s?
3. Describe the Turkish military's evolving role in domestic politics.
4. What were the causes and effects of Turkey's conflict with the PKK?

## Part II: Atatürk—Reform and Transformation

*Instructions:* Use your reading to help you fill in the boxes.

### Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Why did Mustafa Kemal Atatürk believe that Turkey had to break from its Ottoman past?

### Social and Political Change

In what ways did Atatürk try to make Turkish society more European?

### Turkish National Identity

What was Atatürk's vision for a new national identity?

What impact did this vision have on Kurds?

### Secularism and Religion

What effects did Atatürk's ideas about secularism have on Turkey?

### Democracy

List three examples from Part II of the reading in which the Turkish government expanded democratic practices or rights for its citizens.

a.

b.

c.

### Authoritarianism

List three examples from Part II in which the Turkish government used authoritarian measures to implement its policies.

a.

b.

c.

## On the Road to Transformation



This oil painting is titled *İnkılap yolunda*, which translates to *On the way to reform*, or *On the road to transformation*. It was created by Turkish artist Zeki Faik İzer (1905-1988) in 1933, and is currently housed at the Painting and Sculpture Museum of Istanbul. The book cover held by the boy in the painting reads "Turkish Language and History," and the paper scroll under his foot is written in the old Ottoman script.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Painting Analysis

Title of painting: \_\_\_\_\_ Artist: \_\_\_\_\_ Date created: \_\_\_\_\_

### People

Identify four people in the painting.	Describe them. What type of clothing are they wearing? What is their facial expression? What are they doing?	What might this person symbolize or represent?
Example: <i>Woman in top left corner of crowd, behind the couple.</i>	<i>She is removing her headscarf.</i>	<i>She may represent Atatürk's dress reforms.</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

### Objects

Identify and describe four objects in the painting.	What might these objects symbolize or represent?
Example: <i>The platform that the woman with the flag is standing on is inscribed with "1923."</i>	<i>This represents the year that Turkey was founded, after the War of Independence.</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

What message do you think the artist wanted to convey?

## The Three Options: Organization and Preparation

---

### Objectives:

**Students will:** Analyze the issues that frame the debate about Turkey's future.

Identify underlying values of the options.

Integrate the arguments and beliefs of the options and the reading into a persuasive, coherent presentation.

Work cooperatively within groups to organize effective presentations.

### Required Reading:

Students should have read Part III and "Options in Brief" in the student text and completed "Study Guide—Part III" (TRB 25-26) or "Advanced Study Guide—Part III" (TRB-27).

### Handouts:

"Presenting Your Option" (TRB-29) for option groups

"Expressing Key Values" (TRB-30) for option groups

"Speaking for the Turkish Electorate" (TRB-31) for the Turkish citizens

"Turkish Perspectives" (TRB 32-33) for the Turkish citizens

"Options: Graphic Organizer" (TRB-34) for all students

### In the Classroom:

**1. Planning for Group Work**—In order to save time in the classroom, form student groups before beginning Day Three. During the class period of Day Three, students will be preparing for the Day Four simulation. Remind them to incorporate information from the reading into the development of their presentations and questions.

**2a. Option Groups**—Form three groups of five to six students each. Assign an option to each group. Distribute "Presenting Your Option" and "Expressing Key Values" to the three option groups. Explain that the option groups

should follow the instructions in "Presenting Your Option." Note that the option groups should begin by assigning each member a role (students may double up). Inform students that each option group will be called on in Day Four to present the case for its assigned option to a group of Turkish citizens.

**2b. Turkish Citizens**—Distribute "Speaking for the Turkish Electorate" and "Turkish Perspectives" to the remaining students and assign each student a citizen. While the option groups are preparing their presentations, these students should answer the questions on the worksheet and develop clarifying questions for each option. Remind these students that they are expected to turn in their questions at the end of the simulation. Note that the citizens are fictional characters.

**3. Understanding the Options**—Give all students a copy of "Options: Graphic Organizer." As they prepare for the simulation, students should begin to fill in the graphic organizer and use it to help them organize their thoughts. They should complete the worksheet during the role play.

### Suggestions:

See our video "Tips for a Successful Role Play" <[www.choices.edu/pd/roleplay.php](http://www.choices.edu/pd/roleplay.php)>.

### Homework:

Students should complete preparations for the simulation.

## Study Guide—Part III

*Vocabulary:* Be sure that you understand these key terms from Part III of your reading. Circle ones that you do not know.

urbanization  
state-owned industry  
exports  
entrepreneurs  
corruption  
social services  
headscarf  
civilian courts  
GDP

foreign policy  
European Union  
refugees  
ally  
diplomatic relations  
gender inequality  
feminist  
domestic violence

1. List three ways the Turkish economy changed during the 1980s.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. How did the rise of the “Anatolian Tigers” contribute to political changes in Turkey?
3. Why did the military force the Welfare Party out of office?
4. List two issues voters were concerned about in 2002.
  - a.
  - b.
5. In the boxes below, describe the AKP’s relationship with the Constitutional Court and the military.

Constitutional Court

Military

6. What does Turkey hope to accomplish by 2023?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Why has Turkey's admission to the European Union stalled in recent years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. How has Turkey's relationship with Syria changed since 2004?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Describe two differing views on the role of secularism and religion in Turkey today.
  - a.
  
  
  
  
  
  - b.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. List three women's rights issues in Turkey. (Include statistics where available.)
  - a.
  
  
  
  
  
  - b.
  
  
  
  
  
  - c.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. In your own words, describe the following laws:
  - a. Crimes Against Atatürk:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Internet Law:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Advanced Study Guide—Part III

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1. Describe Turkey's recent economic growth. Why are some people concerned about the rate of growth and the measures used to promote economic change?
2. Why have some secularists opposed the rise of the Justice and Development Party (the AKP)?
3. Has Turkey's "zero problems with neighbors" policy been successful? Why or why not?
4. If you were a journalist in Turkey, what are some of the laws that might affect your profession? Would these laws influence your reporting? If so, how?

Part III: Turkey Today

List four examples of changes that occurred in Turkey during the 1980s and 1990s.

Example: Spread of satellite TV	Effects on Turkish Society: More public discussion about religion, culture, and politics

For each issue below, describe a debate or concern among Turkish citizens.

Economic Development	
Religion and Secularism	
Ethnic and Religious Minorities	
Women's Rights	
Authoritarianism	

Justice and Development Party  
(AKP)

Who founded the AKP?

What is the AKP's main opposition party?

What is Vision 2023?

Describe Turkey's foreign policy...

with its neighbors:

with the European Union:

with the United States:

## Presenting Your Option

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### Preparing Your Presentation

**Your Assignment:** Your group is scheduled to appear before a gathering of Turkish citizens. Your assignment is to persuade the citizens that your option should serve as Turkey's guiding philosophy in the coming years. You will be judged on how well you present your option.

**Organizing Your Group:** Each member of your group will take a specific role. Below is a brief explanation of the responsibilities for each role. The **group organizer** is responsible for organizing the presentation of your group's option to the citizens. The **political expert** is responsible for explaining why your option is justified from a political standpoint. You should draw on your understanding of Turkey's domestic and international politics to support your position. The **economic expert** is responsible for explaining why your option is justified from an economic standpoint. You should draw on the lessons of Turkey's economic transformation since the 1980s to support your position. The **historian** is re-

sponsible for explaining why your option is justified from a historical standpoint. You should draw on lessons from Turkey's history to support your position.

Before preparing your part of the presentation, work together to address the questions on the "Expressing Key Values" worksheet and to fill in your option's section of "Options: Graphic Organizer."

### Making Your Case

After your preparations are complete, your group will deliver a three-to-five minute presentation to the gathering of Turkish citizens. The "Expressing Key Values" worksheet, "Options: Graphic Organizer," and other notes may be used, but you should speak clearly and convincingly. During your presentation, you should try to identify the weak points of the other options. After all of the groups have presented their options, the citizens will ask you questions. Any member of your group may respond during the question-and-answer period.

### Consider the following questions as you prepare your presentation:

1. How will your option affect the people of Turkey?
2. What is your option's long-term vision for Turkey?
3. According to your option, what policies and strategies should Turkey pursue to achieve this vision?
4. How might your option be challenged or resisted?

## Expressing Key Values

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Values play a key role in creating public policy. What do we believe about ourselves? What matters most to us? When strongly held values come into conflict, which are most important?

Most often, we think of values in connection with our personal lives. Our attitudes toward our families, friends, and communities are a reflection of our personal values. Values play a critical role in civic life as well. People in Turkey share many of the same values as others around the world. For example, many people in Turkey value economic stability, human rights and equality, and historical and cultural traditions.

Some values fit together well. Others are in conflict. Governments and their citizens are constantly forced to choose among competing values in their ongoing debates about public policy.

Each of the three options for Turkey's future revolves around a distinct set of values. Your job is to identify and explain the most important values of your option. These values should be clearly expressed by every member of your group. This worksheet will help you organize your thoughts.

1. Summarize your option.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are the two most important values underlying your option?
  - a.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. According to your option, why should these values be the guiding force for Turkey's future?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. According to your option, what should be the main goals for Turkey's economic and political development?

## Speaking for the Turkish Electorate

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### Your Role

Speaking on behalf of your assigned citizen's views, you will take part in a political forum for Turkish citizens. You will listen to the presentations of three distinct political philosophies, or options, for Turkey in the coming years. At the conclusion of the forum, you are expected to evaluate each of the options and decide which group presented their option most persuasively. Your teacher will give you an evaluation form to help you do this.

### Your Assignment

While the three option groups are organizing their presentations, you should prepare two questions regarding each of the options. The questions should reflect the values, concerns, and interests of your assigned citizen.

### Questions

1. What are the pressing concerns of your citizen?

2. What do you think your citizen wants for Turkey's future?

3. What do you think life is like for your citizen? Write a short journal entry (5-6 sentences) from your character's perspective about a typical day in his or her life.

Your teacher will collect these questions at the end of the forum.

Your questions should be challenging and critical. For example, a good question for Option 1 might be:

***Isn't there a danger that failing to meet Kurdish demands for equal rights will lead to more conflict?***

During the forum, the three option groups will present their positions. After their presentations are completed, your teacher will call on you and the other citizens to ask questions. The "Evaluation Form" you will receive is designed for you to record your impressions of the options. After this activity is concluded, you and your classmates may be called upon to explain your positions on Turkey's course for the future.

## Turkish Perspectives

**Mesut Pamuk**—You are a forty-five-year-old male photojournalist living in Istanbul. You participated in and documented the 2013 Gezi Park protests. You are openly critical of the Turkish government for its attempts to stifle social media, restrict the independent press, and detain and harass journalists. You feel that Turkey is drifting further and further away from being a true democracy. Despite the harsh crackdown that you and your fellow journalists have experienced, you continue to take to the streets with your camera to document the injustices you witness.

**Meltem Ataman**—You are a twenty-seven-year-old female nurse at a refugee camp for Syrians in Kilis, Turkey. You see despair and hardship on a daily basis. While you do your best to provide health services, you hear stories of refugees who receive almost no assistance from the Turkish government. You also worry about the hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees who live in *gecekondu*s on the outskirts of cities, rather than in refugee camps. They have extremely limited access to social services and are not allowed to hold jobs with Turkish companies or attend Turkish schools. In your opinion, this is a human rights issue—all refugees, as well as every Turkish citizen, should have access to basic political, economic, and social rights.

**Cemile Mutlu**—You are a twenty-year-old female university student in Ankara. You aspire to work as a lawyer for your local government, but have reservations about how you will be treated by colleagues for being a woman and an openly devout Muslim. You do not believe that civil servants (lawyers, judges, military personnel, etc.) should be banned from wearing headscarves in public settings. You feel that any attempt to restrict religious freedom is absurd. You wear a headscarf, but it is only one part of your identity. You hope that reforms will be enacted soon to protect your rights as you build your career.

**Mehmet Ali Parlak**—You are a nineteen-year-old male who lives in a *gecekondu* on the outskirts of Istanbul with your mother and father. You have four younger sisters and an older brother who is serving in the army. Your top worry is helping to provide for your family. When your father can find work as a day laborer hauling bricks at construction sites, he does not make much money. You are able to make some money selling chestnuts in Taksim Square, but it is a two-hour commute by bus each way for you. You come home each day exhausted, knowing that you must do the same tomorrow. Politics do not interest you; you just want to help your family have a better life.

**Rona Barzani**—You are a thirty-one-year-old female Kurdish activist. You live in Diyarbakır, a predominantly Kurdish city. You are currently in jail after being convicted of participating in illegal rallies and for promoting the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) through propaganda. International human rights groups believe you are innocent. You are also seeking to prove your innocence. You plan to continue to pressure the Turkish government to grant equal rights to the Kurdish population after your release.

**Orhan Şentürk**—You are a fifty-five-year-old male historian in Ankara. Your grandfather participated in the Young Turk Revolution. You believe that Turkey must maintain strict secularism as its guiding principle. Everywhere you look, however, you see that this very principle is at risk. You want to prevent religion from seeping any further into politics. To you, this is a personal matter. You feel that you have a responsibility to uphold Atatürk's legacy and honor the achievements of your grandfather. You also cannot believe fellow citizens' criticisms of the military—it is another important source of Turkey's stability.

**Deniz Yılmaz**—You are an eighteen-year-old female living in Ankara. You live in a cramped apartment on the outskirts of the city that you share with three other people. You moved to Ankara from Erzurum, a city in eastern Turkey, two years ago. You were unable to find a permanent job, and have been forced to find work in the informal market as a seamstress. You hope that your quality of life will improve by gaining access to secure employment and, one day, higher education. You are not concerned with politics as the economic hardships of your day-to-day life are more pressing.

**Uzay Kartal**—You are a thirty-five-year-old male entrepreneur and owner of a manufacturing company in the central Anatolian city of Kayseri. You see economic development as the source of Turkey's rapid transformation. You have cast your ballot in recent elections for the AKP. You watch what happens in neighboring countries and fear that Turkish protests will distract your government from focusing on improving its position as a regional and international leader. You support Turkey's bid to join the European Union, and hope that your government will continue to place an emphasis on economic development.

**Ayberk Sezgin**—You are a sixty-six-year-old male retiree in İzmir. You have witnessed the transformation of İzmir—your hometown—in recent years with the growth of the tourism industry. You wonder which “Turkey” will be presented to the growing number of foreign tourists. Will tourists come to İzmir, a port city, just for a beach vacation, or will they visit museums and other attractions that convey Turkey's great history and founding principles? If visitors learn nothing of Turkey's past, the tourism industry and its countless beach resorts risk harming Turkey's heritage.

**Irene Muğla**—You are a forty-year-old female pharmacist in Istanbul. The Gezi Park protests created a rift in your family. Your children, who are students at Istanbul University, and your husband participated in the anti-government protests. You chose not to participate. Your family asked you, “As an Armenian, how can you not take to the streets to fight for your rights?” Yes, you have grievances with the government, but you did not want to place your life at risk. Many anti-government demonstrators are creating havoc in the streets unnecessarily, and you do not want to associate with them. You believe that elected officials will carry out whatever democratic changes Turkey may need.

**Ahmet Sezer**—You are a twenty-seven-year-old male scientific researcher in Istanbul. Following the Gezi Park protests in 2013, you participated in pro-government rallies. You proudly held up the portrait of Prime Minister Erdoğan in these gatherings and then later in re-election rallies. You believe that Erdoğan's party, the AKP, has brought increased stability to Turkey. The economy is booming. Social and economic services have expanded. You often ask yourself, “What more can Turkish citizens want?” You view the corruption and bribery allegations against the AKP as mere attempts to taint the party's reputation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Options: Graphic Organizer

What are the top priorities of this option?	What does this option think about the principle of secularism?	According to this option, what should Turkey's foreign policy priorities be?	According to this option, what role should the military play in Turkey?	What does this option think about Kurdish and other minority groups' calls for greater rights?
Option 1: Preserve Atatürk's Vision				
Option 2: Progress with Strong Leadership				
Option 3: Strengthen Democracy				

## The Three Options: Debate and Discussion

### Objectives:

**Students will:** Articulate the issues that frame current discussions in Turkey.

Explore, debate, and evaluate multiple perspectives on Turkey's future.

Sharpen rhetorical skills through debate and discussion.

Cooperate with classmates in staging a persuasive presentation.

### Handouts:

"Evaluation Form: Turkish Citizens" (TRB-36)

### In the Classroom:

**1. Setting the Stage**—Organize the room so that the three option groups face a row of desks reserved for the students representing Turkish citizens. Distribute "Evaluation Form: Turkish Citizens" to the citizens group. The worksheet should be completed as homework.

**2. Managing the Simulation**—Explain that the simulation will begin with three-to five-minute presentations by each of the option

groups. Remind students that they should present the options from the perspective of people in Turkey. Encourage the group members to speak clearly and convincingly.

Throughout the course of the simulation, all students should fill out "Options: Graphic Organizer."

**3. Class Discussion**—Following the presentations, invite the Turkish citizens to ask clarifying questions. Make sure that each citizen has an opportunity to ask at least one question. The questions should be evenly distributed among all three option groups. If time permits, encourage members of the option groups to challenge the positions of the other groups. During the questioning, allow any member of the option groups to respond. (As an alternative approach, permit questions following the presentation of each option.)

### Homework:

Turkish citizens should complete "Evaluation Form: Turkish Citizens" and be prepared to share their answers with the class.

## Evaluation Form: Turkish Citizens

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**Citizen Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Part I

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?

What was the most persuasive argument presented against this option?

**Option 1:**

**Option 1:**

**Option 2:**

**Option 2:**

**Option 3:**

**Option 3:**

### Part II

Which option do you think your citizen would support? Why?

## Young People Speak Out

### Objectives:

**Students will:** Debrief the role play.

Examine personal stories of youth in Turkey.

Assess the viewpoints of sources and the value of oral histories as historical resources.

### Note:

For this activity, excerpts from six oral histories are provided, but teachers and students can visit the project's website <<http://www.gencleranlatiyor.org/>> if they wish to find more, including video and audio sources. For a list of interviews, click on "Sitemap" in the English-language version of the website.

### Handouts:

"Young People Speak Out" (TRB-39)

"Youth in Turkey: Worksheet" (TRB-40)

"Youth in Turkey: Sources" (TRB 41-46)

### In the Classroom:

**1. Debriefing the Role Play**—Call on students from the Turkish citizens group to share their evaluations of the option groups. Which arguments were most convincing? What were the main concerns addressed by each of the options? Now ask the class which option they think is most likely to direct Turkey's future in the coming years. Which policies and values do they believe should guide Turkey? What reasons do they use to support their views?

**2. Defining Oral History**—Write the term "Oral History" on the board. If students are familiar with the term, encourage them to share what they know. Tell students that oral history involves collecting and recording people's experiences and memories. Today, most researchers collect oral histories through audio or video recordings, and then transcribe them so they can be read and shared. Ask the class why oral histories might be important for un-

derstanding the past and current events. What can students learn from oral history that they might not read in a textbook?

**3. Interviews with Youth in Turkey**—Distribute the handout "Young People Speak Out" to each student, and read through the article as a class. Tell students that they will be reading a few of the oral histories from the project mentioned in the article. Based on the article, what themes do students expect will appear in the interviews with youth in Turkey?

Discuss the scope of the project with the class. Make sure students understand that interviews were conducted in only two provinces in Turkey and do not represent all youth in Turkey, or even in those regions. Before beginning the readings, you may want to project a map of Turkey and locate Diyarbakır and Muğla with your students. Tell students that Diyarbakır, located in eastern Turkey, is a province with a large Kurdish population.

**4. Group Work**—Divide students into small groups and distribute "Youth in Turkey: Worksheet" and "Youth in Turkey: Sources." Assign or have groups select three sources. Although groups will read through the sources together, students should fill out their worksheet individually with their own reactions and interpretations.

**5. Analyzing Oral Histories**—Once groups have completed the worksheet, call the class back together. Ask each group to consider the sources they read. What sort of information did the interviews contain? Were there any themes that came up in more than one? Did students learn anything new about life in Turkey? Were there any parts of the oral histories students felt they could relate to?

Ask students to assess the viewpoint of the sources. Discuss how students might recognize point of view—through language or selective use of facts, for instance. Can students identify opinions in the sources they read? What were

they? How were these opinions shaped by the personal experiences described in the interviews?

**6. Closing Discussion**—Ask students to consider the benefits and limitations of using the “Young People Speak Out” project to learn about the lives of youth in Turkey. What were students able to learn from the oral histories that they did not learn from the readings on Turkey’s history? What are some limitations for using oral histories as a resource? How do students think the information included and point of view might have been different if youth from other regions of Turkey were interviewed? From Istanbul? From Ankara? If students became researchers for the project, who would they interview? What questions would they ask?

## Young People Speak Out

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*Introduction:* From 2011-2012, a team of researchers based at Sabancı University in Istanbul recorded oral histories with young people in Turkey on a range of topics. The project was titled, “Young People Speak Out: The Contribution of Oral History to Facing the Past, Reconciliation, and Democratization in Turkey.” Below is an excerpt from an article that was published about the project in the Turkish newspaper, *Hürriyet Daily News*. As you read, circle the names of the two provinces where the oral histories were conducted and underline words or phrases that point to some of the themes you might expect to find in the interviews. Be prepared to discuss your thoughts with the class.

### “Youth from east and west tell their stories”

By Vercihan Ziflioğlu, *Hürriyet Daily News*, Istanbul, October 30, 2012

A recent oral history project involving young people from Turkey’s eastern province of Diyarbakır and western province of Muğla shows how the country’s youth from different regions see each other.

Conducted by anthropologist Leyla Neyzi from Sabancı University’s Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the project involved some one hundred young people from Dicle and Muğla universities.

“We found young people in Diyarbakır who were willing to speak. They really do want to have their voices heard. They wanted to address in particular the ‘west,’ which is a non-Kurdish population, whom they say did not experience the war in the southeast or its aftermath. They strongly feel that this difference in collective memory and these differences in experience result in a lack of understanding and lack of empathy concerning the Kurdish experience,” Neyzi said. For young people in Muğla, the past is about economic deprivation and a lack of modernity, Neyzi added.

“They speak of their parents and grandparents. The young people we spoke to came of age at a time when advancements in tourism transformed particularly the coastal regions.”

### Defining history

Neyzi said two sets of interviews were conducted with some one hundred young people between the ages of fifteen and thirty-five. “Oral history is conventionally associated with the elderly. In this case, we were interested in how young people constructed a past they did not necessarily experience directly. How do young people in Turkey define history? Through what sources do they learn about the past?”

Project curator Önder Özengi said, “We have noticed in this project that regardless of where they are from, from the west or the east, young people nurture a concern for the future in terms of economic standing. Even though for some young people from Diyarbakır a political dimension emerges as a priority to some extent, again, economic problems and concerns for the future are intense.”

## Youth in Turkey: Worksheet

*Instructions:* Select three sources from the handout. Use your selections to answer the questions in the chart below.

1. Who is speaking? (*name, age, gender, and province*)
2. What aspect of life in Turkey does the interviewee discuss?
3. What is the most interesting or powerful aspect of the oral history for you?
4. What is the point of view of the interviewee? Do they express any strong opinions?
5. What do the three selections tell you about the lives of young people in Turkey?

	Oral History 1	Oral History 2	Oral History 3
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

## Youth in Turkey: Sources

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### Source A

#### Tourism

*Gözde is a twenty-nine-year-old woman who lives in the province of Muğla.*

Our hotel was built when I was in middle school.... It's almost as if we've had the hotel since the moment I opened my eyes. Of course, when you're a child, it's mostly the swimming pool and play area that attract you. Run, dive in the pool, go jump and skip over there, go make friends over there and so on.

In those years, that place brought the world to your feet. I wasn't aware of how important it was—it seemed so natural. I'd be swimming in the pool and there'd be a Norwegian girl my age swimming beside me. I'd say, "Hello," and a dialogue would begin. Over here is an English girl, over there someone else. It was a natural thing; we'd form a friendship. We'd become pen pals, send presents to each other. They would invite me to visit; we'd invite them, and so on. I had completely no idea about what it meant as work, it was something I started as friendship....

After [high school], your family begins to direct you of course. There is this and that work. In the future you will be concerned with these; this place is yours. And without really noticing it, your life is loaded with a burden of responsibility. Your future is certain. Instead of a choice—"What would you like to be?" or "What are you thinking, what are you expecting?" it's "There is this reality for you and you must work for it, you must be involved with it." Therefore, in university I studied with this in mind. As soon as I finished university, I returned here, became a hotel manager, became a tourism agent....

As I said, I finished university...at the age of twenty-two. I started work as I described earlier. But while I was sitting at that table, I never thought about the issue of being a woman, or a man, or being this age. But after this much time has passed, I am realizing some things. When I came into the market, when I went to a meeting, when I was meeting with someone, generally I was the only woman in the room. I said to myself, "My goodness, aren't there any women hotel managers?"... There are women who are heads of departments, chefs, directors. But there are, to my knowledge, no women who own their hotels and manage them. I've never met one.... There hasn't been any problem, like, "You are a woman, so your contract price is this, your food price is that." There was never any of that. We are doing business, there are official papers and documents. Like everybody else you go to meetings, you make agreements. Only I do have a little bit of pride concerning myself. It's obvious, in the world, particularly in Turkey, the percentage of women in the top managerial group is very small. There are efforts being made concerning women's participation in the work force. It is a continually debated subject....

One thing that has always made me sad, that I've always wished for concerning Marmaris: that its cultural heritage, its traditional uniqueness could have been preserved.

Since the English make up a large part of the customers in the tourist trade, people say, "The English like this; they expect this," and have a tendency to do it that way. And then you see that the place has become an "English Town." There are pubs everywhere. I'm not saying that pubs are a bad thing, but it writes above the door, "Tony's Pub." My man, we are in Marmaris now. Whoever is Tony?...

## Source B

### Work

*Ali is a thirty-five-year-old Kurdish man who lives in the province of Diyarbakır.*

I can't say that my friends, the children of my neighborhood, had much of a childhood. Because we started to work at a very early age. At the age of six, I was shining shoes. I went to school, then I polished shoes and sold water. A little later I started selling simit [a type of bread] on the street. When I was in third grade I worked for a stove-maker and a tinsmith. In the summer I passed to fourth grade, they sent me to work in small-industry.... In winter you come and go to school. When you get out of school you take your tray of simit, you sell them. It wasn't only me, all my friends in the neighborhood did the same. Our whole childhood was like this: selling bread on the streets. We earned money, we loafed around. We went to work, wandered around, hung out, did stuff. Of course, most of the money we earned we brought home, trying to help our family. There was no other source of income. There was, but it wasn't enough....

I ran away from home. You know how children imagine places, other people's lives. There are places they idealize. My friends would come and tell me, "İzmir is like this, like that. We went there and did this and that." That's how our imagination develops.... You are seventeen years old, but your imagination hasn't grown, hasn't seen.... So we egged one another on. "If you say let's go, let's go." So, we took off, three friends, on the train for two, two and a half days. We went to İzmir.

In İzmir we were working as fishermen in Güzelbahçe. When we first went, two or three of us worked on a boat. All of a sudden, we were ten, fifteen persons working on different boats and all. On one boat, even, it was only our people working. There were many among us who didn't know the sea, had never seen the sea, and were working as fishermen....

I really have lots of respect for fishermen. It's probably one of the hardest and simplest of all trades in the world. It varies with the time and place, of course. When the weather is cold, it's very hard. When the wind blows, it's very hard. And you learn to live together, communally. You live with fifteen other men. You eat, drink, wake up, wash dishes, do laundry with fifteen men. Somehow you learn to live together among all kinds of people....

Later on, working on a boat was something different. People look at you from a certain angle, are disturbed about something, but you don't understand what. You actually know, but you don't understand; you can't admit it.... [Y]ou stay, but those who let you stay act as if they are doing you a favor: "Look, you're working here, the people here don't want you, but in spite of that I am giving you work." But they couldn't do the work we are doing. That's another issue....

[T]he main reason for our being able to stay was that we put in more effort than most of the others. Otherwise, it wouldn't have been easy... You think of the Bulgarian refugees who came here. When a Bulgarian refugee comes here, an immigrant comes here, they have to work much harder than a Turkish worker or they can't make it. I think we were in that position. We had to be much more self-sacrificing. Those men would go out and throw one net per day; we'd throw five nets a day. We had to. Our money got stolen, we were treated unfairly.... Being children, we couldn't say much....

## Source C

### Attending University

*Buket is a twenty-two-year-old woman who lives in the province of Muğla.*

I am studying in Muğla to be a teacher.... I work at TOG [an organization for university students] as a volunteer.... I like to read books. I enjoy spending time with my friends. I am a regular person really, ordinary.

My father is from a village in Muğla, my mother's from a village in Muğla. Later, in time, my father's father migrated from the village to Muğla's center.

I spent my childhood in Muğla. My paternal grandmother raised me—my mother was working. My childhood, it was in the neighborhood, playing on the streets with friends and so on.

Muğla is known as being very free; a free city, a modern city, one of the most secular cities, and so forth. But when you [go] into the neighborhoods, I don't feel that freedom so much. Particularly for girls. Although this may stem from my own way of looking at things....

After high school I prepared for the Central University Exam for a year. That time passed between home and the preparation school. When I came to university, I was very comfortable the first year. Every day I would stay with my friends, we'd go to Marmaris, here and there. The first year passed very easily. At the end of that first year I became acquainted with TOG.

[TOG] changed me.... I mean, I felt that it developed me very much.... I've entered and exited certain groups...if there was a theater group, I'd only do one play, then leave. Of course, they added something, but TOG is very different.... [F]rom the point of view of socializing; I'm still shy and reserved when I go somewhere... I can't say that I've completely overcome this, but at least it's a place that clearly is helping me to overcome this....

Most of our friends at Muğla University are actually from the East. Most are Kurds. I think in some subjects they can be more... How can I express it? They are more aware of some things, and want to do more things... At least the ones I've observed, I've seen, are like that, I mean. When we say we want to do something at TOG, I've seen they [Kurdish students] are the first to rush to do something. For example, their most important issue right now concerns peace. They are more active, more like "you can't really understand something unless you have experienced it." For example we had a project on the subject of peace in society. Almost all the friends in that project were from the East....

I can't say that I have a good dialogue with any of the people in my division, or the people in my class. For example the girls in our class are sitting around, let's say ten people, you can't get out of a fixed conversation —"Which TV program did you watch yesterday?"... That conversation goes on for fifty hours! Because of this I'm not very chummy with my class; I can say my communication is pretty cut off. I mean, maybe something could attract them really, like TOG or something else, something which would be useful for them. Or I could say some things to them, but I've never tried hard in that sense. I didn't feel like saying, "Come on, girls, let's do this."

## Source D Language

*Lütü is a twenty-five-year-old man who lives in the province of Diyarbakır.*

Learning a language later on is very, very hard. Because you go home and your family speaks another language. And they still speak that language. My mother doesn't know Turkish; my father, at one time a course or something was set up probably, and he learned a little Turkish from there.... And military service of course.... At that time Kurds learned the language from the military.... It's not that I'm against Turkish, let me open such a parenthesis. I'm not against any language, but...I have a language of my own....

[O]ur language was forbidden, I mean forbidden for years, forbidden for centuries. Right now, it has been a forbidden language for more than a hundred years. If you have a Kurdish cassette in your house, it doesn't matter what the content is, whether political or not, when they see that cassette, you, your family are done for, your children, everyone. All the family members are in jail. They don't care about anybody. How old someone is, this or that; you are a Kurd, you are in jail.... Today I am speaking so comfortably, but you can be sure, today it isn't very comfortable either. Because it isn't a legal right. You take a language I've learned since I was born from my mother, and she from her mother, and whoever from whoever, and you forbid it. Naturally this is a difficult psychology to be in. Because we experienced it, we really struggled....

Sırrı Süreyya Önder [Kurdish film director, actor, and politician] always says, "You can become anything in this country except a Kurd." It's like that for us. You can become anything, you can become president, you can become a prophet, but if you can't speak your own language, if you don't feel like you're yourself, or if you can't express yourself in your own way, then you are really not much of anything. You're nothing. Because when you're like them, or like somebody else, when you're not expressing yourself as yourself, it has no meaning....

And we're a joyful people, ha, I swear, a very joyful people. For example, when the bodies of the children, of guerillas, arrive for funerals, they dance.... Truly, they have learned how to dance by now, clearly they've learned to live with their pain. These people are interesting, I mean. A joyful, very joyful nation. This probably makes them powerful, I don't know. When four to five people are lost from every house, you get used to it....

Our whole life has been about the Kurdish issue. Well, because that's what I experienced in my life. What can I do? What can I explain? What else is there in my life? I grew up constantly with these problems. They are my life. I am many things because of these things. My language is forbidden, I am forced to migrate, I am left in poverty, I live in misery. I have to stay in their dormitory, whatever. I grow up under their system. I have nothing of my own.... This is my life, I mean. Being excluded, pushed into a corner. There's nothing about this that is acceptable. And I don't accept it. My conscience doesn't accept it. They always scorned me, excluded me.

## Source E

### Living in a Small Town

*Cenk is a twenty-nine-year-old man who lives in the province of Muğla.*

After a certain amount of time has passed and because you've already started university, you begin to realize that some things are lacking. For example, theater, cinema, a bookstore.... I don't know whether everyone feels this, I'm not sure. But my group of friends and I felt it. At that time we'd always say, "If there were a good movie theater here, we could watch a good movie." Movie theaters were opening in the bottom floors of hotels at that time here. If I remember correctly, there were two. As a school we were taken there. You sit in uncomfortable chairs and watch bad movies, of course. Also the films came very late. In terms of your cultural development, you are behind in lots of things, because this is just a beach town. I don't know when I began to realize this. Most probably after I'd seen İzmir or Istanbul....

[F]rom an intellectual point of view, all roads to developing yourself were somewhat closed here. They're still closed, in 2012. There's still no bookshop in Marmaris where you can go and wander around the shelves. This is sad.

Still, when I go to Istanbul from time to time, I think, "I wonder if I could live here." I look around to see which districts are more suitable for me, saying, "I wonder if I could live here." The answer is negative. For some reason, Istanbul is a very good place to wander around in or to spend time in. But it is frightening to me to think of living there. I think it's because I grew up and lived here [Marmaris].... My family and all my friends are here. It's also because of me. There's this fear in me [of] another place....

Yes, there are huge changes; there wasn't any of this are you are looking at now. This was land, agricultural fields. And villagers lived here. Marmaris was just like a little valley.... I remember there were always hotels. Beaches. Tourists would come in the summer, leave in the winter; I remember all of that. There were lots of Finnish tourists. In the past, in my childhood, lots of tourists came from Finland. Later the market changed, of course; I can't explain it like a tourist agent maybe, but later an English market arose. It was packed; there's still a dominant English market in Marmaris. Later, the Russians came.... Nostalgia is a good thing; I always remember different things. For example, I remember the white wrought iron and marble tables, the chairs and tea gardens along the beach. For example I remember the bougainvillea [a flowering plant] on every house's balcony, and in the gardens.... I remember the houses and the town being much cleaner. And I remember the people being less citified, and much more innocent....

Because Marmaris's population cannot fulfill the demands of the tourism industry, seasonal workers migrate here for work. They're in bars, in restaurants, wherever you look. From outside you can see this. There's a huge migration for work mostly from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia....

And [the locals] say, "Marmaris didn't use to be like this. Marmaris took in so many migrants. That's why we became like this."... What happened to Marmaris? Is it really such a god-awful place? What have we become? What were we in the past? I can understand this much; nostalgia is lovely. Everything past is lovely; it makes you recall different things. But this probably stems from being against change. Also, we are always ready to find a guilty party. "You are guilty! You came from elsewhere and changed us." For the people of Marmaris, it doesn't have to be a Kurd. As I've said, all the people who have come from elsewhere in some way and settled here pose a threat to the locals....

## Source F

### Childhood Memories

*Elif is a twenty-six-year-old Kurdish woman who lives in the province of Diyarbakır. Below, Elif discusses violence that occurred as a result of the Kurdish conflict.*

You know how we always read in novels, or watch in films, a life like that, crowded and happy. If I had to summarize it in just one sentence: crowded and happy....

[I]f dad didn't do something, if mom didn't do it, there was grandma, granddad, aunts. My grandmother, for example, would gather us all together and roll out dough, bring things like cheese, parsley, onions. Right away in two minutes. There was this stone. She'd put the stuff on top of the stone; she'd put the stone on top of a fire, and right there, right away, she'd make crepes and give them to us. I can never forget these wonderful things, things so beautiful you could maybe give your whole fortune and not be able to buy them....

Suddenly life changes. When I say change, the first thing that comes to my mind is a very wounding thing for me.

Yes, I was a child. At that time I was six years old, six or seven, because I was eight the year we left. I went downstairs, went down to the second floor for my cousin's pants or for the iron, or something like that....

I don't really remember going in, there was just a loud noise, an explosion. Then the door opened and they grabbed me and pulled me in; either my dad or my uncle. They had fired at us. And they had taken aim right at my head.... It wasn't a question of scaring us: they aimed right at the head, but it pierced the sheet iron above....

There was this one night, again we were sleeping downstairs, we couldn't sleep on the sofa because it was near the window, and they fired at us again. A bullet went right through the corner of that piece of plastic around the television set—televisions had tubes then. I mean, if someone had been standing up, it would have been right on the mark; that's why they were shooting. We actually kept that television set for years. We wanted people to ask, "How did this television set get this way?" so that we'd tell them this. Let's not forget. Let's not let it be forgotten. I mean, on the one hand, you want to forget, but on the other hand, I mean, we've lived through all these things, let it be known, seen, heard....

For a long, a very long time I couldn't go to bed alone. Let's say up until last year. Until one or two years ago, I couldn't sleep by myself. I couldn't sleep in the dark.... I got over this in the last few years. When I say I got over it, I mean maybe you just get used to it. I don't know. Because every evening people were killed....

Later, we moved to Antalya. The first few months in Antalya were very, very hard for us. People wouldn't rent us a house because we were Kurds. We moved into this bad house.... The family had only found this place with great difficulty, and we went there. My mother didn't unpack any of our things. Just a few plates, bowls, blankets, things to spread over us while we slept and all. It was like, "Let's get away from here as soon as possible. Let it be over."

## Assessment Using Documents

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*Instructions:* These questions relate to the legacy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey. Answer the questions that follow on a separate piece of paper.

1.   a. According to M. Şükrü Hanioglu in Document 8, how was Atatürk's rule authoritarian?  
  
      b. In Document 7, why does Stephen Kinzer believe that Atatürk used "raw power" instead of democratic rule to carry out his reforms?
2. How do Document 4 and Document 6 support the conclusions made in Document 3?
3. Assess the value and limitations of Document 1 and Document 9 for historians studying the legacy of Atatürk. Be sure to refer to the origin and purpose of each document.
4. Using these sources and your knowledge, explain the significance of Atatürk's legacy for Turkey.

## Documents

**Document 1:** From the website of the Atatürk Society of America (ASA), <<http://www.ataturk-society.org/ataturk.asp>>. The ASA describes itself as “an independent non-profit organization founded in 1995 in Washington DC, with the objective of promoting the ideals of Atatürk’s political legacy.”

**“M. Kemal Atatürk was a national leader who founded the present Republic of Turkey, and who introduced sweeping reforms to the nation. As a reformist and modernist with unparalleled vision, he ended the theocratic regime of the Ottoman Empire, and founded a democratic republican nation state. He launched a cultural reform to put the new Turkish nation on an equal footing with, as he called it, ‘the contemporary civilization.’ He was a universally recognized military genius who put an end to the centuries old colonialism of European powers by defeating them at their plan designed by Britain to annihilate the Turkish nation. Viewed in an international perspective, he achieved a radical political and cultural transformation in less than twenty years, at a time when the bad peace settlements of World War I created dictators, national socialism, fascism, and communism in most of Europe. Therefore, his victory over theocracy and colonialism stands as a matchless example for democracy and for the free world, respectively.”**

**Document 2:** From Ömer Taşpınar, *Kurdish Nationalism and Political Islam in Turkey: Islamist Identity in Transition*, Routledge, 2005, p. 21. Taşpınar is a Turkish professor of Middle East and European studies at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

**“[I]t is important to explain the dual nature of the Kemalist legacy in modern Turkey. The first, and undisputed, legacy of Kemalism is national independence. The epic refusal of the Sèvres Treaty, which envisioned the partitioning of Anatolia among WW I victors, is still very vivid in Turkish collective memory. This first aspect of the Kemalist legacy, based on the national resistance and military triumph, equates Atatürk with values such as patriotism, independence and national sovereignty that unite all Turks. It is, however, the second part of the Kemalist legacy, centered on the project of radical secularization and westernization, which continues to be a matter of sociological debate and political controversy in Turkish society.”**

**Document 3:** From Mustafa Akyol, “A heretical idea: Atatürk is no god,” *Hürriyet Daily News*, November 2008. Mustafa Akyol is a Turkish writer and journalist living in Istanbul.

**“Here [in Turkey], Atatürk is treated not as a man, but as a God. His cult personality, paralleled only in North Korea, is depicted as an all-knowing, all-encompassing leader whose supra-human intellect left behind a flawless blueprint for the nation to follow. ‘O mighty Atatürk who has given us this day, I will relentlessly walk down your path,’ Turkish students are made to swear in every school every week.\* Poets describe him as ‘the Sun who enlightened the nation,’ and ‘the God who stepped in to Samsun [to start the war of liberation].”**

\*This requirement was lifted in 2013.

**Document 4:** Law No. 5816—Law Concerning Crimes Committed Against Atatürk (Aleyhine İşlenen Suçlar Hakkında Kanun), adopted on July 25, 1951.

**“Article 1: Anyone who publicly insults or curses the memory of Atatürk shall be imprisoned with a heavy sentence of between one and three years. A heavy sentence of between one and five years shall be given to anyone who destroys, breaks, ruins, or defaces a statue, bust, or monument representing Atatürk or the grave of Atatürk. Anyone who encourages others to commit the crimes outlined in the paragraphs above will be punished as if committing the crime.”**

**Document 5:** Video: “How did Atatürk reform Turkey?” Answered by Stephen Kinzer. See <[www.choices.edu/kinzer](http://www.choices.edu/kinzer)>. Kinzer is an American journalist and a visiting fellow at Brown University. He is the author of *Crescent and Star*, a book about Turkey.



**Document 6:** Two photographs of Anıtkabir, Atatürk's mausoleum.



Susannah Bechtel. March 2013.

Anıtkabir is located in Ankara. Each year, Atatürk's tomb draws millions of Turkish visitors and international tourists. On November 10, 2013, the seventy-fifth anniversary of Atatürk's death, over a million people visited the monument in a single day. On the front of the mausoleum, inscribed on the left, is Atatürk's "Address to the Turkish Youth." Inscribed on the right is text of Atatürk's speech honoring the tenth anniversary of the republic. The artwork leading up the steps depicts scenes from Turkish history, including battles from the War of Independence.



Selâhattin Sonmez (CC BY-SA 2.5).

On April 14, 2007, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators gathered outside Anıtkabir. Many voiced support for strict secularism in Turkey and criticism of the ruling party, the AKP.

**Document 7:** From Stephen Kinzer, *Crescent and Star*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008, pp. 43-44. Kinzer is an American journalist and a visiting fellow at Brown University in Providence, RI. He is a former correspondent for *The New York Times*.

**“Kemal took fewer years to wipe away the defining traditions of Turkish life than centuries had been spent building them. Some of the steps he took were relatively innocuous, such as introducing the metric system.... Others were momentous but grudgingly accepted, such as giving women the rights to vote and hold office. A few were so bitterly resisted that they were ultimately repealed, including a ban on the broadcast of Oriental music and a decree that the ezan, the Muslim call to prayer, must be chanted in Turkish rather than Arabic. None of them, however, could have been imposed if Turkey had been a democracy. Great as Kemal’s personal prestige was, it alone could not have made his revolution possible. Demolishing the legacy of an ancient nation so suddenly, and imposing such a completely new order on the rubble, required the use of much raw power. Kemal did not shrink from using it.”**

**Document 8:** From M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton University Press, 2011, pp. 231-232. Hanioglu is a Turkish professor of late Ottoman history at Princeton University in Princeton, New Jersey.

**“The radicalism of Atatürk’s [reform] program led to the authoritarian character of his politics. Like many other transformative state builders, he harbored little tolerance for dissent or criticism. He regarded the Republican People’s Party [CHP] as his main agent of reform and insisted on its hegemony. Like the CUP leaders who had abandoned democratic politics when it jeopardized their program, Mustafa Kemal resorted to single-party rule in order to execute his agenda without compromise.... [I]n his eyes...all measures were permissible to assure its success.... In his single-minded efforts to realize his utopia, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk brought about a drastic reshaping of Turkish state and society. Neither Turkey nor the Muslim world will ever be the same again.”**

**Document 9:** Grace Ellison (quoting Atatürk), *Turkey To-Day*, Hutchinson, 1928, p. 24. Ellison was a British journalist and writer.

**“My people are going to learn the principles of democracy, the dictates of truth, and the teachings of science. Superstition must go. Let them worship as they will; every man can follow his own conscience, provided it does not interfere with sane reason or bid him against the liberty of his fellow-men.”**

**Document 10:** This oil painting is titled *İnkılap yolunda*, which translates to *On the way to reform*, or *On the road to transformation*. It was created by Turkish artist Zeki Faik İzer (1905-1988) in 1933, and is currently housed at the Painting and Sculpture Museum of Istanbul. Atatürk is depicted pointing ahead. The book cover held by the boy in the painting reads “Turkish Language and History,” and the paper scroll under his foot is written in the old Ottoman script.



## Key Terms

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### Introduction and Part I

empire  
ethnic group  
sultan  
Islamic law  
caliph  
nationalism  
autonomy  
military conscription  
absolute monarchy  
parliament

separatist movements  
secular  
authoritarian  
coup d'état  
Central Powers  
Allied Powers  
genocide  
deportation  
armistice

resistance groups  
nationalists  
self-determination  
colonial possessions  
mandate system  
imperial control  
partition  
civil war  
sovereignty

### Part II

social  
economic  
national identity  
civil code  
penal code  
commercial code  
Western countries  
development  
agrarian

international community  
Cold War  
martial law  
economic recession  
inflation  
unicameral  
Islamist  
insurgency

### Part III

urbanization  
state-owned industry  
exports  
entrepreneurs  
corruption  
social services  
headscarf  
civilian courts  
GDP

foreign policy  
European Union  
refugees  
ally  
diplomatic relations  
gender inequality  
feminist  
domestic violence

## Issues Toolbox

### Authoritarianism:

A political system characterized by concentrated power among one or a few leaders. Under an authoritarian government, freedoms of expression are often limited and political opposition suppressed. In 1923, Turkey emerged as an authoritarian and undemocratic one-party state. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the CHP crushed opposition parties and almost every form of political dissent. Over time, Turkey evolved into a multiparty democracy. Yet many critics claim that Turkey's authoritarian legacy lives on today. They point to the violent suppression of protesters, the jailing of journalists, and discriminatory treatment of religious and ethnic minorities.

### Kemalism:

The official ideology of Turkey, based on the principles espoused by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

### Nationalism:

Nationalism is a strong devotion and loyalty to one's country and people. In the years following Turkey's founding in 1923, Atatürk sought to forge a new national identity and a strong sense of Turkish nationalism. One of his goals was to foster unity and loyalty among diverse groups within Turkey's borders.

### Nation and State:

A nation is a group of people who are united by a common language, religion, history, or homeland. In international relations, a state is a country with a defined territory and government that is recognized by its citizens and other countries and has sole control over its military. States may contain one or more nations within their boundaries, and nations within a state may or may not feel that the state represents them as a group.

Atatürk envisioned Turkey as both a state and a nation, unified by a common language, the values of secularism, and a shared history. Atatürk's top-down approach to creating

a nation of Turks was and remains a point of controversy to this day.

Many Kurds, an ethnic-linguistic minority in Turkey as well as in the states of Iran, Iraq, Armenia, and Syria, see themselves as a nation and seek the establishment of an independent Kurdish state that could represent their political interests. They rally behind the cause of "self-determination," arguing that they, and not the states claiming to represent them, should govern their affairs.

### Secularism:

The meaning of secularism varies from country to country. In the United States, secularism is often referred to as "the separation of church and state," or the separation of religion and the government.

What emerged as Turkey's approach to secularism differed from the U.S. model. Following independence, Atatürk distanced Turkey from the Ottoman Empire's centuries-long history of religious rule and prevented religion from being the basis of the new country's political system. Atatürk believed the government and its laws should be completely secular, with no religious influence. At the same time, Atatürk believed the best way to maintain strict secularism was to increase government control over religious institutions, for example, through the work of the Diyanet.

Turkey's approach to secularism was, and continues to be, controversial. While Atatürk claimed that every person should be free to "follow his own conscience," many government policies and practices have made it difficult for Turkish citizens to practice their religion freely and without government interference, particularly religious minorities. Pious individuals have faced challenges participating in government, and religiously-inspired parties have been shut down throughout much of Turkey's history. To this day, many groups within Turkey seek to redefine Turkey's understanding of secularism, and reshape the relationship between government and religion.

## Making Choices Work in Your Classroom

This section of the Teacher Resource Book offers suggestions for teachers as they adapt Choices curricula on current issues to their classrooms. They are drawn from the experiences of teachers who have used Choices curricula successfully in their classrooms and from educational research on student-centered instruction.

### Managing the Choices Simulation

A central activity of every Choices unit is the role-play simulation in which students advocate different options and question each other. Just as thoughtful preparation is necessary to set the stage for cooperative group learning, careful planning for the presentations can increase the effectiveness of the simulation. Time is the essential ingredient to keep in mind. A minimum of forty-five to fifty minutes is necessary for the presentations. Teachers who have been able to schedule a double period or extend the length of class to one hour report that the extra time is beneficial. When necessary, the role-play simulation can be run over two days, but this disrupts momentum. The best strategy for managing the role play is to establish and enforce strict time limits, such as five minutes for each option presentation, ten minutes for questions and challenges, and the final five minutes of class for wrapping up. It is crucial to make students aware of strict time limits as they prepare their presentations.

### Fostering Group Deliberation

The consideration of alternative views is not finished when the options role play is over. The options presented are framed in stark terms in order to clarify differences. In the end, students should be expected to articulate their own views on the issue. These views will be more sophisticated and nuanced if students have had an opportunity to challenge one another to think more critically about the merits and trade-offs of alternative views. See Guidelines for Deliberation <[www.choices.edu/deliberation](http://www.choices.edu/deliberation)> for suggestions on deliberation.

### Adjusting for Students of Differing Abilities

Teachers of students at all levels—from middle school to AP—have used Choices materials successfully. Many teachers make adjustments to the materials for their students. Here are some suggestions:

- Go over vocabulary and concepts with visual tools such as concept maps and word pictures.
- Require students to answer guiding questions in the text as checks for understanding.
- Shorten reading assignments; cut and paste sections.
- Combine readings with political cartoon analysis, map analysis, or movie-watching.
- Read some sections of the readings out loud.
- Ask students to create graphic organizers for sections of the reading, or fill in ones you have partially completed.
- Supplement with different types of readings, such as from literature or media sources.
- Ask student groups to create a bumper sticker, PowerPoint presentation, or collage representing their option.
- Do only some activities and readings from the unit rather than all of them.

### Adjusting for Large and Small Classes

Choices units are designed for an average class of twenty-five students. In larger classes, additional roles, such as those of newspaper reporter or member of a special interest group, can be assigned to increase student participation in the simulation. With larger option groups, additional tasks might be to create a poster, political cartoon, or public service announcement that represents the viewpoint of an option. In smaller classes, the teacher can serve as the moderator of the debate, and administrators, parents, or faculty can be invited to participate. Another option is to combine two small classes.

## Assessing Student Achievement

**Grading Group Assignments:** Students and teachers both know that group grades can be motivating for students, while at the same time they can create controversy. Telling students in advance that the group will receive one grade often motivates group members to hold each other accountable. This can foster group cohesion and lead to better group results. It is also important to give individual grades for group-work assignments in order to recognize an individual's contribution to the group. The "Assessment Guide for Oral Presentations" on the following page is designed to help teachers evaluate group presentations.

**Requiring Self-Evaluation:** Having students complete self-evaluations is an effective way to encourage them to think about their own learning. Self-evaluations can take many forms and are useful in a variety of circumstances. They are particularly helpful in getting students to think constructively about group collaboration. In developing a self-evaluation tool for students, teachers need to pose clear and direct questions to students. Two key benefits of student self-evaluation are that it involves students in the assessment process,

and that it provides teachers with valuable insights into the contributions of individual students and the dynamics of different groups. These insights can help teachers to organize groups for future cooperative assignments.

**Testing:** Research shows that students using the Choices approach learn the factual information presented as well as or better than from lecture-discussion format. Students using Choices curricula demonstrate a greater ability to think critically, analyze multiple perspectives, and articulate original viewpoints. Teachers should hold students accountable for learning historical information, concepts, and current events presented in Choices units. A variety of types of testing questions and assessment devices can require students to demonstrate critical thinking and historical understanding.

## For Further Reading

Daniels, Harvey, and Marilyn Bizar. *Teaching the Best Practice Way: Methods That Matter, K-12*. Portland, Maine: Stenhouse Publishers, 2005.

## Assessment Guide for Oral Presentations

Group assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

Group members: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Assessment	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Needs Improvement</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
1. The group made good use of its preparation time	5	4	3	2	1
2. The presentation reflected analysis of the issues under consideration	5	4	3	2	1
3. The presentation was coherent and persuasive	5	4	3	2	1
4. The group incorporated relevant sections of the reading into its presentation	5	4	3	2	1
5. The group's presenters spoke clearly, maintained eye contact, and made an effort to hold the attention of their audience	5	4	3	2	1
6. The presentation incorporated contributions from all the members of the group	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Individual Assessment</b>					
1. The student cooperated with other group members	5	4	3	2	1
2. The student was well-prepared to meet his or her responsibilities	5	4	3	2	1
3. The student made a significant contribution to the group's presentation	5	4	3	2	1

## Alternative Three-Day Lesson Plan

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### Day 1:

See Day Two of the suggested Five-Day Lesson Plan. (Students should have read the Introduction and Part II of the reading and completed “Study Guide—Part II” or “Advanced Study Guide—Part II” before beginning the lesson.)

**Homework:** Students should read Part III.

### Day 2:

Assign each student one of the three options, and allow students a few minutes to familiarize themselves with the mindsets of the options. Call on students to consider the benefits and trade-offs of their assigned option. What are the main policy priorities of each option? How do the options differ in their vision for Turkey’s future?

**Homework:** Students should read through the handout “Turkish Perspectives” (TRB 32-33) and consider which options might align with the concerns and values of the citizens described.

### Day 3:

See Day Five of the Suggested Five-Day Lesson Plan.

## Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey

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*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* traces the final years of the Ottoman Empire and the history of the Turkish Republic. Students explore the legacies of Atatürk's sweeping reforms and then grapple with the questions and challenges facing people in Turkey today.

*Empire, Republic, Democracy: A History of Turkey* is part of a continuing series on current and historical international issues published by the Choices Program at Brown University. Choices materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens.

## THE CHOICES PROGRAM

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